Polar express

There was not a naughty child to be found as about 100 sick and disabled kids headed to the North Pole in search of Santa's workshop PAGE 8

OH, BARRY: MANILOW HITS A MILESTONE

WITH HIS 50TH HIT ON BILLBOARD'S ADULT CONTEMPORARY CHART, THE BALLADEER IS IN SOME EXCLUSIVE COMPANY PAGE 27

VANCOUVER metro®

Wednesday, December 5, 2012

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Developer cancels North Van project after 'smear campaign'

Lonsdale. Councillor says development was too dense and that company 'hijacked' public hearing

EMILY JACKSON
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The developer of a massive residential and commercial area in Lonsdale has abandoned the project after claiming North Vancouver councillors made "unprofessional, undemocratic" and "possibly defamatory statements" that amounted to a "smear campaign against the company."

In a scathing letter to North Vancouver's mayor on Monday, Onni Group president Rossano De Cotiis said his company will withdraw its plans to build at the 13 Street and Lonsdale Avenue Safeway site after two councillors allegedly accused the firm of manipulating a public hearing by loading the speaker list with names of supporters.

After two years of planning, 20 consultations with stakeholders and the public and a marathon public hearing in November, North Vancouver council voted on Monday to have another public hearing in January.

But it's not worth it for Onni, which confirmed the cancellation on Tuesday.

The company already downsized its project to two towers from three to accommodate residents' wishes, promised affordable housing and child care worth about $10 million and vowed to use sustainable-building principles. The development had "overwhelming support," De Cotiis said in a statement.

"Unfortunately, we are no longer able to tolerate public abuse from these colleagues of yours and are unwilling to continue to go to endless rounds of public hearings until councillors (Pam) Bookham and (Rod) Clark get their way," De Cotiis wrote.

While Coun. Rod Clark regrets the redevelopment will be delayed, he stands by his comments that Onni "hijacked" the public hearing.

"In my view, they absolutely hijacked the public meeting," he said. "The public process was not served well, and you can put that directly at the feet of Onni."

The project was too dense for the area, Clark said, although Onni disputes his claims. Council now has the chance to better define its density program and "get it right this time," Clark said.

As for the loss of commercial space, child-care resources, affordable housing and other amenities, Clark said there simply weren't enough perks to make the project worthwhile based on its density.

The proposed Onni development in Lonsdale, North Vancouver, was scrapped on Tuesday. COURTESY OF ONNI

Helter shelter

A temporary winter shelter in Yaletown has residents worried about 'dangerous activity' in the area PAGE 6

Defiance in Egypt

Tens of thousands rally against president's seizure of new powers PAGE 22

Best footy forward

Look for some new faces when Canada's women's soccer team heads to camp PAGE 37

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Apathy or good gov.?

Vancouverites more worked up about gardens than $1-billion budget

Property-tax and utility-fee increases are on the table, but Vancouverites don't seem riled up about the imminent boost.

Only six people signed up to address city council at the 2013 budget meeting Tuesday night, a contrast to the dozens that spoke about community gardens at a marathon meeting last week and the hundreds that challenged the budget in years past.

Mayor Gregor Robertson credited the starkly different atmosphere to a "clear and transparent" 177-page budget that "keeps our taxes low and addresses a lot of the demands that we hear voiced by citizens."

CUPE 15 president Paul Faoro told council he supports the budget, which he called "fair and responsible" and said would improve services.

If passed, the budget will spend $258 million on capital costs — including 250 solar-powered garbage cans at $4,000 a pop — and $1.148 billion on day-to-day operating costs.

It will also raise property taxes by two per cent despite "lukewarm" public willingness for tax increases.

During budget consultation, 40 per cent were not willing to pay a tax increase while 60 per cent were willing to pay between two and four per cent extra. Only 56 per cent of respondents felt they got good overall value for their tax dollars.

EMILY JACKSON/METRO

For more local news go to metronews.ca

Richard Rosenthal, chief civilian director of the Independent Investigations Office, releases a report on Tuesday clearing Vancouver police officers in the October death of an intoxicated man. PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

Van. police cleared of blame in man's death

Investigation. Civilian-led IIO finds that officers acted appropriately in Oct. 7 death of man in police custody

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS
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B.C.'s Independent Investigations Office has ruled out any Vancouver police wrongdoing in an in-custody death of an intoxicated 51-year-old man in October.

Chief civilian director Richard Rosenthal released his office's first public report, which looked into the case, on Tuesday.

On Oct. 7, police responded to reports that a man was causing a disturbance at a park in the 500 block of West 7th Avenue.

Rosenthal said the officers decided not to arrest the man or send him to detox so they offered him a ride home.

The man accepted and was placed inside a VPD van without handcuffs, but the officers found the man unconscious when they got to his home.

Paramedics were called and performed resuscitation, but the man was pronounced dead after being rushed to Vancouver General Hospital.

Rosenthal concluded that the officers acted appropriately.

"At this point, this report will be provided to the Vancouver Police Department and the Police Complaint Commissioner so that they can evaluate the case from the policy perspective," he said. "But at least from the criminal perspective, the case is concluded."

According to the report, an autopsy showed the man's blood-alcohol content was 0.30 per cent and he died of "acute alcohol toxicity."

The IIO resolved the case in 58 days; a case in Penticton involving an attempted suicide in September took 47 days.

"I am really pushing my investigators. I have told them the words 'back burner' will not be placed together anywhere in this office," Rosenthal said.

The civilian-led office was created to oversee incidents of serious harm or death involving police in B.C.

Resolving cases

"I am really pushing my investigators. I have told them the words 'back burner' will not be placed together ... in this office."

Richard Rosenthal, chief civilian director, Independent Investigations Office

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Vancouver Grizzlies practice floor for sale on Craigslist

End of a team. Surface goes on sale 11 years after team left town for Memphis

For sale: One NBA practice court, used by the Vancouver Grizzlies before the franchise moved to Memphis after the 2000-01 season.

Asking price: $13,000.

Must have: A darn big space to put it.

The practice court where the departed Vancouver Grizzlies worked out during their ill-fated time in Vancouver has been put up for sale on Craigslist.

For $13,000, or much less, according to the owner, someone just needs to come and haul it away. It's a big haul, mind you, with the NBA regulation-size court 94 feet long by 50 feet wide.

Since the company Extreme Air Park, which now owns the space, placed the ad last Friday, owner Michael Marti has received nearly 60 calls, some of them from Memphis.

Coincidentally, the Memphis Grizzlies just had a new $200,000 court installed at FedExForum in September, replacing one that was 10 years old.

Eric Granger, vice-president of arena operations for the Grizzlies, said the average life span of an NBA court is 10 years. The court it replaced was set to find new life at a high school or college gymnasium.

The Vancouver Grizzlies' practice court is 12 years old but in great condition, Marti said Monday.

The court was part of Gold's Gym in the Vancouver suburb of Richmond. The facility has since been sold and is now being redeveloped as a 42,000-square-foot area of interlocking trampolines.

"It's in terrific shape. If it was beat up and not worth anything, it would have been a no-brainer for us to throw it away," Marti said in an interview while he was between fielding phone calls from interested purchasers. "We're trying to look for something that makes sense rather than ripping out this beautiful floor and putting it in the dumpster. It's the last of the Grizzlies here in Vancouver."

PEG FONG/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Quoted

"It's in terrific shape. If it was beat up and not worth anything, it would have been a no-brainer for us to throw it away."

Owner Michael Marti

The floor of the former Vancouver Grizzlies practice facility has been placed for sale on Craigslist. CRAIGSLIST

Snowy owl makes surprise appearance in West End

Mardi Foster-Walker snapped this photo of a snowy owl on the balcony of her West-End apartment. CONTRIBUTED

A Vancouver woman says it was a hoot when a snowy owl perched on the balcony of her West End apartment Thursday.

"I couldn't believe it," said Mardi Foster-Walker, who looked outside to see the white owl after hearing a kerfuffle of crows in a tree outside her apartment.

"It's really unusual to see an owl downtown."

Foster-Walker said the owl flew away then came back again a second time, when she was able to snap a photo on her iPad.

Quoted

"It's really unusual to see an owl downtown."

Mardi Foster-Walker

A biologist agreed that an owl in the city is an unusual occurrence.

"That's very strange," said Wayne Goodey, a zoology professor at the University of B.C.

"Normally, they prefer marshy areas and flat, open country."

Goodey said an explanation could be that it was a young owl spending its first winter here and either didn't know what to do or was pushed out of the nest by its parents.

"If the bird shows a remarkable tameness, that often comes out of desperation," said Goodey, adding that the owl could have been hungry.

But why did the owl perch on the balcony and not one of the trees outside Foster-Wallace's apartment?

"I think in this case it was a convenient perch. They don't want to go into the tightly spaced branches of a tree."

Either way, Foster-Walker sees the owl as a good-luck charm.

"It's like a good omen," she said.

CARA MCKENNA/FOR METRO

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Temporary winter shelter heats up Yaletown residents

Worries about substance abuse. Councillors say misinformation is the root of the problem

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS
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A group of angry Yaletown residents fear that an emergency winter homeless shelter set to open in the next two weeks will attract drug and crime activity into the area. But a city councillor said there's no reason to get riled up about it.

Coun. Kerry Jang said a temporary shelter at 1210 Seymour St. is a great opportunity to help get homeless people in the area off the street and hopefully into permanent housing.

"We've learned this over the last four years of running shelters in neighbourhoods without any impact," Jang said Tuesday. "I understand their fears. I would say that a lot of the fears are based on misinformation or misunderstanding about the homeless and how shelters are run."

But Sharon Promislow, spokeswoman for the Emery Barnes Park Community Association, said there is already an oversaturation of social and housing services for homeless people in the area, such as the Covenant House on Drake Street and the Coast Mental Health drop-in centre just across the street from the shelter.

"The intent of the low-barrier shelter is extremely honourable and a valuable function in the city, but it just so happens that this particular location is excruciatingly inappropriate," she said.

Promislow is worried because the low-barrier shelter, which doesn't allow drug use or drinking inside so tenants must use outside, could "import dangerous activity" in the area.

Jang said concerned residents can always call the city directly if they have any issues or problems and it will be dealt with immediately.

A temporary winter shelter in the 1200 block Seymour Street set to open in the next two weeks is getting some Yaletown residents riled up for fears of street disorder and drug activity. ALEEZA KHAN/METRO FILE

Det. Phil Ens dons a Batman costume as he shows how easily cars can be broken into at a parkade at Royal Centre in downtown Vancouver. CARA MCKENNA/FOR METRO

While you're in the mall, thieves are looting your car, police warn

While you're shopping for presents this holiday season, Vancouver police warn that thieves may be helping themselves to presents from your vehicle.

There have been almost 7,500 thefts from vehicles in Vancouver this year alone.

That number has decreased compared to previous years, but police say it is still too high.

"Any time you leave valuables unattended in your vehicle they're at risk of being stolen," said Det. Phillip Ens of the VPD auto-crime enforcement unit.

"There's a common misperception that gifts are safe in the trunk."

According to Canadian Direct Insurance (CDI), the most commonly stolen items include laptops, GPS systems, iPods, stereo equipment, loose change and insurance papers.

"Your car can get robbed in less than a minute," said Colin Brown, chief operating officer of CDI.

"So a quick stop at the store gives thieves ample time to make their move."

Certain parking lots have a "Safer Parking Award," which means they are safer than average lots, and often report a zero crime rate month-to-month.

The VPD, who sponsor the Safer Parking Initiative, are encouraging shoppers to park in these lots.

Theft from vehicles has almost been cut in half since 2007 when the initiative began.

CARA MCKENNA/FOR METRO

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Radar, sticky sleds help sick kids rendezvous with Santa

Flight to the North Pole. Sick, disabled kids enjoy plane ride, visit with Santa

KATE WEBB
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The wait for about 100 sick and disabled children and their families to board a very special flight to the North Pole at YVR Tuesday yielded some very interesting theories about aviation and the fine art of Santa-spotting.

When asked where the flight was headed, eight-year-old Faris Abdul Wahab, who was born with brittle-bone disease but was extremely agile in his tiny walker, gave a straightforward answer:

"It will launch into orbit," he said, eyes wide and a huge grin on his face.

OK, sounds good. But ... how will the pilot find Santa and get him to come on board?

"Maybe with a Santa tracker?" he replied, less sure of this answer, even though it was indeed right.

Another child explained to one of the pilots that no chimney was necessary for the high-flying rendezvous: Santa was going to teleport himself aboard the moving aircraft.

The lounge at gate D53 was filled with excited giggles, crafts and tiny painted faces as helpers from Air Transat and the Children's Wish Foundation led cheers and songs in the buildup to their seventh annual flight in search of Santa.

About half an hour after takeoff Santa and Mrs. Claus made their grand entrance. They were greeted with roaring cheers as they passed out stockings full of toys, and the jolly old elf told Metro there was not a naughty child in sight.

"I heard a lot of stomping and a lot of screaming, and it kind of told me, 'Oh, it's that day of the year,' so I off I went on my sleigh for a little joy-ride and found you," he said.

"I had the special sleigh with the sticky sleds, landed on top, and I crawled in through the cockpit and thanked the pilots for a nice, smooth landing."

Pilot Pierre Bergeron, who has successfully operated the plane's on-board Santa tracker for three years now, said this is the most important flight of the year.

"It's all about giving back to all of those families that have gone through some pretty tough stuff," he said. "We're just happy to do it."

Quote

"I had the special sleigh with the sticky sleds, landed on top, and I crawled in through the cockpit and thanked the pilots for a nice, smooth landing."

Santa Claus
explaining how he got on the plane

Miya Phillips, 2, meets Santa face-to-face aboard Air Transat and the Children's Wish Foundation's annual flight in search of Santa Tuesday. KATE WEBB/METRO

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Elderly driver dies after crashing into house

A 72-year-old man has died after passing out and crashing his van through a house in North Vancouver on Monday.

Mounties were called to a crash just past noon in the 1700 block of Jones Avenue.

"He was observed by another vehicle and a pedestrian as being slumped over the wheel of his vehicle as he drove off the road and then didn't even brake before he hit the house," Cpl. Richard De Jong said Tuesday.

Paramedics arrived and the man was still unconscious. They performed CPR and rushed him to Lions Gate Hospital, where the North Vancouver resident was pronounced dead.

"An autopsy will be done to determine the cause of death, but considering his age we're assuming that it could be cardiac arrest," he said.

The homeowner was upstairs at the time, but wasn't injured.

De Jong said the incident caused thousands of dollars in damages to the house.

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

Quote

"An autopsy will be done to determine the cause of death, but considering his age we're assuming that it could be cardiac arrest."

Cpl. Richard De Jong
on the possible cause of death of the deceased driver

RCMP

Joggers injured in Surrey hit-and-run Monday night

Two female joggers are injured after a hit-and-run in Surrey Monday night.

The car, described as a white crossover vehicle, drove away without stopping after striking the two women, 51 and 54.

Both women were taken to the hospital.

They were wearing headlamps and reflective clothing at the time of the accident.

Surrey RCMP have responded to many pedestrian accidents lately and say drivers need to be more careful at night.

"Too often we see drivers not adjust their driving behaviours to reflect the changing road conditions," says Cpl. Bert Paquet. "Driving is a complex task, and in poorer, darker weather it is more important than ever to slow down and be extra vigilant."

CARA MCKENNA/FOR METRO

Rise

Impaired-driving numbers up in Vancouver

Impaired-driving incidents have increased in Vancouver, police said Tuesday.

According to the VPD, 60 drivers licences were taken away from impaired drivers Friday and Saturday, an increase of 15 since 2011. Of them, 13 were new drivers who are required to have a blood-alcohol level of zero.

CARA MCKENNA/FOR METRO

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Not guilty! Soldier, wife share a long embrace

Kandahar blast killed one. Reservist cleared of manslaughter and breach of duty, but he's found guilty on negligence charge

A Canadian reservist has been found not guilty of manslaughter in an Afghanistan training accident that killed one soldier and injured four others more than two years ago.

A military jury at a court martial in Calgary also acquitted Maj. Darryl Watts of breach of duty.

But the five jurors, all senior officers in the Canadian Forces, convicted him of unlawfully causing bodily harm and negligent performance of military duty.

Watts, who stood at attention while the verdict was being read, shared a long embrace with his wife once the court had adjourned.

The courtroom at the Mewata Armoury in Calgary where the trial was held, was jammed with military personnel.

The maximum sentence for unlawfully causing bodily harm is imprisonment of up to 10 years. Negligent performance of duty can bring dismissal with disgrace from the Canadian Forces.

Cpl. Josh Baker died when a Claymore anti-personnel mine loaded with 700 steel balls peppered the platoon on a practice range near Kandahar city in February 2010.

The prosecution had argued that Watts, the platoon leader, turned a blind eye to safety standards and abdicated his duty as a leader when he handed over responsibility to his second-in-command, who was an expert on the weapon.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"I feel very strongly in the man's innocence."

Defence lawyer Balfour Der

Maj. Darryl Watts, pictured heading to court last month, has been found not guilty of manslaughter in a fatal Afghanistan training accident.

LARRY MACDOUGAL/THE CANADIAN PRESS

UN aftermath. After big debate, Tories won't cut aid to the Palestinians

The Conservative government pledged Tuesday night to preserve millions of dollars in Canadian aid to the Palestinians.

The issue was discussed during a 90-minute meeting in Ottawa involving Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird, International Co-operation Minister Julian Fantino and four envoys called home for talks.

Baird had recalled them to discuss a response to the Palestinians' new United Nations status.

Baird's spokesperson said Tuesday night that Canada's five-year, $300-million commitment would be maintained when it expires in March. The money goes toward strengthening the Palestinian justice system, economic development, health and education.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

World outsiders

Canada strongly opposed the Palestinians' successful effort last week to win elevated status at the UN.

- **Almost alone.** Canada was one of only nine countries to vote against the Palestinians in the 193-nation General Assembly.

Health Canada acts

Food testing lab's licence suspended

Health Canada has yanked the licence of a Toronto-area chemical testing laboratory.

The watchdog says it found falsified results in tests involving medications, natural food products and food additives. It says in some cases, Chemi Pharmaceutical did not test drug ingredients.

The agency said there is no evidence the health of Canadians has been compromised. Chemi Pharmaceutical did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Transit fares as of January 1, 2013

For more information on the new fare rates, please visit **translink.ca/farechange** or call **604.953.3333.**

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	2 ZONES	$4.00	$2.75
	3 ZONES	$5.50	$3.75
Discount Fares Weekdays after 6:30 p.m. & all day Saturday, Sunday & holidays	ALL ZONES	$2.75	$1.75
Prepaid Fares		**ADULT**	**CONCESSION**
Monthly FareCard Monthly transit passes are eligible for federal tax credits	1 ZONE	$91.00	$52.00 *for all zones*
	2 ZONES	$124.00	
	3 ZONES	$170.00	
FareSaver Tickets Book of 10	1 ZONE	$21.00	$17.50*
	2 ZONES	$31.50	N/A
	3 ZONES	$42.00	N/A
DayPass		$9.75	$7.50

*Concession FareSavers are available for 1 Zone travel only. Travel through 2 or more zones requires the purchase of an AddFare during the regular fare period.

West Coast Express fares also increase January 1, 2013. Visit **translink.ca/wce** for more information.

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Indonesia. Divorced via text message, second wife, 17, 'not a virgin'

Hundreds of Indonesians rallied Tuesday to demand a district chief's resignation after revelations of his text-message divorce to a teenage girl four days after their marriage.

The incident has sparked public outrage.

Aceng Fikri, chief of Garut District in West Java province, took 17-year-old Fani Oktora as his second wife in July.

But Fikri, 40, quickly divorced her via a short text message, alleging Oktora was not a virgin when they married as he had expected. He said he spent about $26,000 on the wedding.

Students and rights activists in Garut spit and trampled on pictures of Fikri on Tuesday before burning them outside the local council building.

It was the second consecutive day of protests against Fikri, whose case came into the spotlight last week after a picture was posted on the Internet.

On Monday, dozens of people rallied in front of his house and the council building.

Divorce by text

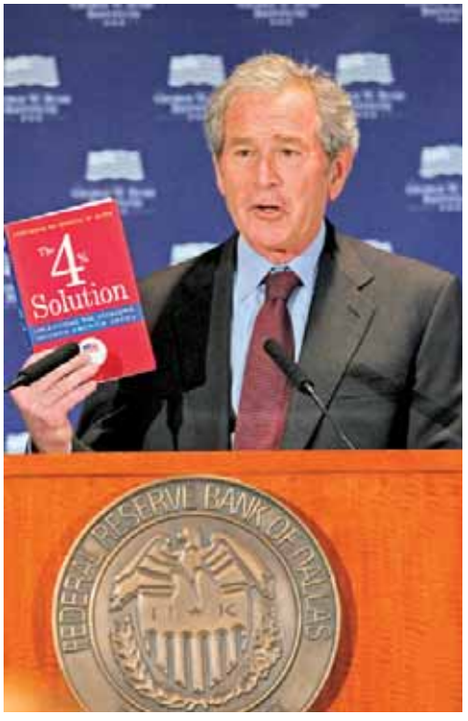
Some Muslims believe in an Islamic ritual allowing men to end a marriage by telling their wives they divorce them. However, divorce by text message is uncommon in moderate Indonesia.

Late Tuesday, the local council issued a recommendation for Fikri's dismissal, but the process will have to wait for a verdict by the Supreme Court.

Also on Tuesday, Oktora, accompanied by her lawyers, filed a complaint with police in the capital, Jakarta, accusing Fikri of domestic violence by holding her captive after the wedding and fraudulence for declaring that he was a widower.

A lawyer representing Fikri said they would file a complaint of defamation against Oktora, whom he said had signed an agreement saying she would not complain about the marriage.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Bush talks immigration

Former U.S. President George W. Bush holds up a book Tuesday as he gives opening remarks at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas for a conference called Immigration and 4% Growth: How Immigrants grow the U.S. Economy. LM OTERO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

California. Judge upholds ban on therapy to change sexual orientation

For the second time in two days, a federal judge in California has issued a decision on the state's first-of-its-kind law prohibiting licensed psychotherapists from trying to change the sexual orientations of gay minors.

U.S. District Judge Kimberly Mueller issued a ruling Tuesday that will allow the ban on "conversion" therapy to take effect on Jan. 1.

Her ruling came in a lawsuit filed by four counsellors, two families, a professional organization for practitioners and a Christian therapist group seeking to overturn the law.

On Monday night, Mueller's colleague, U.S. District Judge William Shubb, handed down a somewhat competing ruling.

Shubb granted a request by two mental health providers and a former patient to be immune from the law until their lawsuit seeking to overturn it on U.S. First Amendment grounds can be heard next year. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tuscan vineyard

16,500 gallons of prized wine lost

It's suspected that vandals have dumped almost the entire 2007-2012 production of one of Italy's most sought-after wines Soldera Brunello di Montalcino. Vineyard owner Giuseppe Soldera said Tuesday only "a little bit" remained of the production, and he wasn't sure what he would do with it. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

North Carolina

Prison warden investigated

The warden at a prison in the U.S. state of North Carolina where six inmates allege correctional officers forced them to rub hot sauce on their genitals has been suspended pending the outcome of an investigation. A second employee also has been reassigned.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Boy and Girl Scouts of Britain may soon welcome atheists

Inclusion. Scouts of each nation set own rules — U.K. already permits other faiths and all sexualities

Atheists could officially be allowed into Britain's boy and girl scouts after more than a century.

The Scout Association said Tuesday it plans to draft an alternative oath without references to God so that young people who do not have a faith could also join the organization.

The current oath — which will remain in use — reads: "On my honour, I promise that I will do my best, to do my duty to God and to the queen, to help other people and to keep the Scout Law."

The group has offered alternative versions of the words "duty to God" for Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists for over four decades, but there have been no such exceptions made for atheists.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Times-a-changin'

Remaining relevant for a century

Wayne Bulpitt, the association's chief commissioner in the U.K., said the group is asking for its members' views on the proposed alternative to keep the group relevant and to encourage membership.

"We are a values-based movement and exploring faith and religion will remain a key element of the Scouting program. That will not change," he said. "However, throughout our 105-year history, we have continued to evolve so that we remain relevant to communities across the U.K."

He said they plan to keep the oath to the queen, although non-British citizens living in Britain may pledge duty to "the country in which I am now living."

Scouts from around the world attend the 2007 World Scout Jamboree held in July in Chelmsford, England. GARETH CATTERMOLE/GETTY IMAGES FILE

Nativity scene booted to private land after 50 years

A woman walks past an atheist sign along Ocean Avenue at Palisades Park in Santa Monica, Calif. RINGO H.W. CHIU/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Less than a week after a U.S. federal judge ruled Santa Monica has a right to ban religious displays on public land, a Christian group says it will stage its traditional Christmas Nativity scene on private land.

The Los Angeles Times reported the much-debated and litigated display of 14 life-sized figures depicting the birth of Jesus Christ, formerly hosted in Palisades Park, will open Sunday on Ocean Park Boulevard. The scenes are scheduled for display until early January, said Hunter Jameson, chairman of the Nativity Scenes Committee.

"We are deeply grateful for the use of this new site to allow all of Santa Monica's distinctive Christmas story to continue spreading the message of joy, hope and peace found in the Christ child's birth," he said in a statement.

The atheist group opposing the scene's display on public land praised the decision, saying the scene belongs on private land.

"This move is great," Annie Laurie Gaylor of the Freedom From Religion Foundation told the Times. "It does undercut any argument they have that they don't have free expression. Obviously they do."

A lawyer for the Christian group, William Becker, was critical of Monday's decision and pledged to file an appeal, saying the move to private land isn't a resolution.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Timeline

- The Nativity scenes were erected in Palisades Park for nearly six decades before atheists began erecting their own displays in protest.
- City officials then banned all displays in the park, drawing a lawsuit from proponents of the Christmas displays.

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Calgary author wins Bad Sex in Fiction award

Infrared. Huston's steamy novel revolves around a photographer who takes pictures of her lovers during sex

Author Nancy Huston
THE CANADIAN PRESS

It's the prize no author wants to win. Award-winning Calgary-born novelist Nancy Huston won Britain's Bad Sex in Fiction award Tuesday for her novel Infrared — a tale of a photographer who takes pictures of her lovers during sex that proved too revealing for the judges.

The choice was announced by Downton Abbey actress Samantha Bond during a ceremony at the Naval & Military Club in London.

Judges of the tongue-in-cheek prize — which is run by the Literary Review magazine — said they were struck by a description of "flesh, that archaic kingdom that brings forth tears and terrors, nightmares, babies and bedazzlements," and by a long passage that builds to a climax of "undulating space."

Huston, who lives in Paris, was not on hand to collect her prize. In a statement read by her publicist, the 59-year-old author said she hoped her victory would "incite thousands of British women to take close-up photos of their lovers' bodies in all states of array and disarray."

Huston, who writes in both French and English, is the author of more than a dozen novels, including Plainsong and Fault Lines. She has previously won France's Prix Goncourt prize and was a finalist for Britain's Orange Prize for fiction by women. Previous recipients of the dubious honour, usually accepted with good grace, include Sebastian Faulks, the late Norman Mailer and the late John Updike, who was awarded a Bad Sex lifetime achievement award in 2008.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Swinging in the Big Apple

Max Fauconnier swings alone during a preview of Ann Hamilton's multimedia art installation, The Event of a Thread, on Tuesday at the Park Avenue Armory in New York. BEBETO MATTHEWS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Who's the daddy?

Court orders paternity test

A French court on Tuesday ordered a paternity test for a multimillionaire who former justice minister Rachida Dati claims fathered her nearly four-year-old daughter. The alleged father is legally entitled to refuse.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Higher learning

Harvard gives the OK to sex group

Kinky sex has been admitted to Harvard.

America's oldest university has formally recognized Harvard College Munch, a group promoting discussions and safe practices of kinky and alternative sex.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

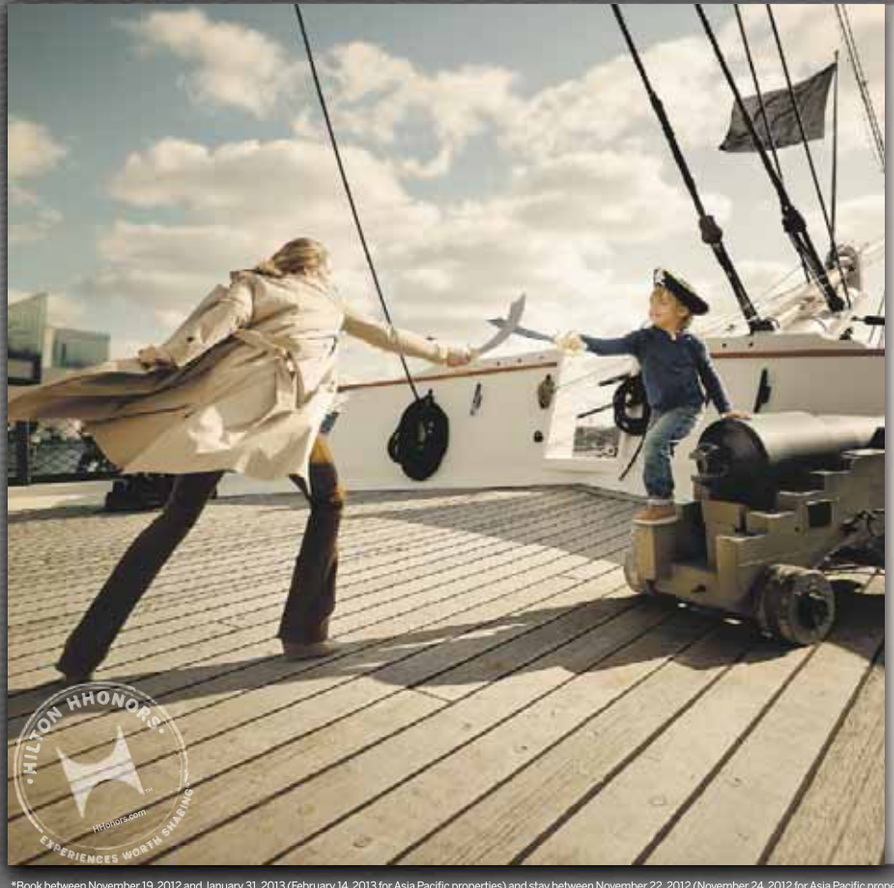
Pizza perfume

Pizza Hut puts scent in a bottle

It's the ideal gift for perfume-loving foodies: Pizza Hut's new pizza-scented perfume.

The idea for the fragrance began as a Facebook joke, said the company's ad agency Grip Limited.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



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Rescuer accused of dognapping

For pet owners, it's often heartbreaking.

Families come home to find their dogs have vanished from inside houses, behind locked fences and outdoor kennels in communities east of Albuquerque, N.M.

But officials say there's been a break in the case.

A woman was arrested and accused of stealing two pit bulls — and then throwing them from her moving car as the dogs' owner gave chase.

And officials now think they have confirmed long-standing suspicions the missing pets were victims of an overzealous animal rescuer turned serial dognapper.

Missing dogs

60

Officials estimate 60 dogs have gone missing in the area over the last few years.

"It really cracked the case," Edgewood animal control officer Mike Ring said of the arrest of Debbie Swenerton, 59.

Authorities think she stole dogs and then took them to shelters and said they were strays in need of adoption.

Ring said he suspects Swenerton could be part of a network of local activists concerned about the treatment of animals in rural areas, where many dogs are tied up, live outside or are allowed to roam freely.

Swenerton's attorney, Quinn Kirby, called the allegations ridiculous.

"It is outrageous to suggest that someone like her would do something so heinous as to throw a dog out the window of a moving car."

Barbara Tellier, a friend of Swenerton's who runs the Alliance Against Animal Abuse Inc., said she believes Swenerton is being set up by officials in a county where animal abuse is rampant and officials don't care.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A lion cub sleeps at a South African nature reserve. But outside its safe confines, there's a nightmare situation for the proud species across the continent as ever-encroaching humans take over the lions' habitat.

JON GAMBRELL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Human tide pushes lions out of the savannahs

A lost homeland. Fifty years ago, 100,000 lions roamed Africa; now there are just 32,000, report says

Pity the king of beasts.

The lions that roam Africa's savannahs have lost as much as 75 per cent of their habitat in the last 50 years, says a new study.

Humans are overtaking their land and the lion population is dwindling, says the study, released Tuesday.

Fifty years ago, nearly 100,000 lions roamed across the African continent.

But researchers at Duke University say the number of lions across the continent has dropped to as few as 32,000.

"Lion numbers have declined precipitously in the last century," says the study, published by the journal Biodiversity and Conservation.

"The situation in West Africa is particularly dire, with no large population remaining and lions now absent from many of the region's national parks.''

In recent years, an ever-growing human population has come into the savannah lands to settle and develop — pushing out the lions.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dire statistics

Five countries in Africa have likely lost their lions, the report says.

- **The top nine.** Only nine countries contain at least 1,000 lions.
- **The top homeland.** Tanzania has more than 40 per cent of the continent's lions, the Duke report says.

Elephants slaughtered

Mounted gangs in poaching carnage

Cameroon's dwindling elephant population is being decimated by heavily armed gangs of international ivory poachers, says the World Wide Fund for Nature.

Tighter security has been mounted because intelligence shows two gangs of poachers from Sudan are heading for the area, WWF Cameroon conservation director Hanson Njiforti said Tuesday.

Already this year, poachers travelled 1,000 kilometres on horseback from Sudan to reach northern Cameroon's Bouba Ndjida National Park, where they killed more than 300 elephants in two months. Eighty per cent of the park's elephant population was wiped out.

The high demand for ivory in Asia is fuelling the trade. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Albertan 'White Boy Posse' charged in three murders

Sensationalized crimes. Four gang members charged in string of homicides, one in which the victim was decapitated

Four members of an organized crime group known as the White Boy Posse have been charged in three separate murders in Alberta and Saskatchewan, including one in which a head was found in an Edmonton alley.

Saskatoon mom killed

"This was a tragic crime that left a husband without his wife and four children without their mother."

Saskatoon police Chief Clive Weighill, speaking about Lorry Santos, 34, who was shot and killed in September when she answered the door of her Saskatoon home to strangers.

The head was found by a woman out for a walk on Oct. 25. The decapitated remains of Robert John Roth had been discovered less than a week earlier and 100 kilometres away near the Alberta town of Ranfurly.

"It was significant. It was sensationalized," Insp. Jerry Scott with the Alberta RCMP's serious crimes branch said Tuesday.

Scott said police stepped up their investigation once they realized what they faced. The gang had been on their radar for a few years.

"We were very cognizant of who we were dealing with and the public safety matters."

Randy James Wayne O'Hagan, 22, of Lloydminster, Alta., and Nikolas Jon Nowytzkyj, 32, of Wainwright, Alta., have been charged with first-degree murder and offering an indignity to a human body.

Ranfurly residents said at the time of the initial discovery that Roth's remains were found in a ditch next to a running pickup truck. The victim was 54 years old and lived in Lloydminster.

Police investigate after a head was found in an alley in Edmonton last month. Four men have been arrested in three murder cases in Alberta and Saskatchewan, including one in which the victim was decapitated. JESSE WHITNACK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

O'Hagan, along with Kyle Darren Halbauer, 22, also of Lloydminster, is as well facing charges in the death of another man. Bryan Gower's body was found on a rural road near Kitscoty, Alta., in September.

THE CANADIAN PRESS/CHED/CJWW

New hearing

Barack Obama's uncle not being deported yet

U.S. President Barack Obama's uncle in Massachusetts is getting a new deportation hearing.

Onyango Obama is from Kenya and was ordered by an immigration judge to leave the United States in 1992.

An Immigration spokesman won't say what triggered the recent decision.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Times Square station

Couple argued before husband's subway murder

The wife of a New York City man who was pushed onto subway tracks to his death by a mumbling stranger says she and her husband had argued before the tragedy.

Ki-Suck Han of Queens died at a hospital shortly after being hit by a train Monday at the Times Square subway station.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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John McAfee seeks asylum in Guatemala

On the lam. Founder of anti-virus company fled Belize fearing death in police custody

Software company founder John McAfee has surfaced in public for the first time in weeks, saying on Tuesday that he plans to ask for asylum in Guatemala because he fears persecution in Belize.

McAfee spoke to The Associated Press in a restaurant near a high-end hotel where he is staying in Guatemala City after sneaking out of neighbouring Belize. Police in Belize have called him a person of interest in the November slaying of a fellow American expat.

McAfee says he is being persecuted by the Belizean government and has sensitive information about official corruption in the country where he lived in a compound guarded by aggressive dogs and armed guards.

Real-world security

"I need a safe place where I can actually speak out."

Anti-virus company founder John McAfee

"Now that I'm here, I can speak freely. I can speak openly," McAfee said.

He said he plans to petition the Guatemalan government to allow him to stay. He added that he fears he will be killed if he turns himself in for questioning in Belize.

"Belize does not have a good track record of providing safety when they ask to question you," he said. "I felt much more secure crossing the border into a country that had laws that were backed by the justice system."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

John McAfee, left, with his lawyer, Telesforo Guerra, answers questions at a restaurant in Guatemala City on Tuesday. MOISES CASTILLO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Royal Family. Boy or girl, Kate's baby will take the throne: U.K. government

The business of monarchy has always been stacked in favour of men. Not any more — or so the British government promises.

The first child of Prince William and his wife, Kate, will be born a king or a queen in waiting, under changes to succession rules designed to overturn centuries of tradition and give royal daughters the same rights as sons.

Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg pledged on Tuesday that the law on succession would be changed at the "earliest opportunity." He said "whether the baby is a boy or a girl, they will have an equal claim to the throne."

"Born to rule, be it a boy or a girl" proclaimed the Daily Mail, which noted that the baby had "already made royal and constitutional history" even before it is born.

Not so fast, caution others.

A royal saga needs a touch of uncertainty, and experts point out that despite politicians' promises, the law giving males primacy in succession has not yet been changed — and the clock is ticking.

"We know that the wishes of politicians are written in water," said royal historian Robert Lacey. "Law only becomes law when the law is made — and the law has not been made."

For centuries, preference was given to male heirs, so a first-born princess would be leapfrogged in the succession by a younger brother. As a result, there have been some 35 kings of England since the Norman Conquest in 1066 but only seven queens.

Britain's Prince William leaves a hospital in London on Tuesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Last year, the leaders of Britain and the 15 former colonies that have the queen as their head of state informally agreed to establish new rules giving female children equal status with males in the order of succession — something that will require legal changes in each country.

Meanwhile, the Duchess of Cambridge was "continuing to feel better" on Tuesday as she spent a second day in a London hospital being treated for acute morning sickness, St. James's Palace said. William visited his wife in the hospital for several hours, as photographers and camera crews from around the world camped outside, eager for news on the royal pregnancy. Officials said earlier the duchess was not yet 12 weeks pregnant.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Reconsider rocket launch, UN chief urges North Korea

Ballistic missile program. Pyongyang announced Monday it planned to launch a satellite sometime between Dec. 10 and 22

A satellite image shows the Sohae Satellite Launch Station in North Korea. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon strongly urged North Korea on Tuesday to reconsider its decision to launch a rocket, which would be "a clear violation" of UN sanctions.

The UN chief also urged Pyongyang to suspend all activities related to its ballistic missile program, UN spokesman Martin Nesirky said.

The UN Security Council has imposed two rounds of sanctions on North Korea following its nuclear tests, and a 2009 resolution orders the country not to conduct any launch using ballistic missile technology.

"Such a launch would also heighten tension in the region," Ban's spokesman said.

It would be North Korea's second launch attempt under leader Kim Jong Un, who took power following his father Kim Jong Il's death nearly a year ago. The embarrassing misfire of its last rocket eight months ago earned the country widespread international condemnation.

The secretary general also called on the North to reestablish a moratorium on missile launches, as required by the Security Council, Nesirky said.

Ban, a former South Korean foreign minister, renewed his call on North Korean authorities "to work towards building confidence with neighbouring countries and improving the life of its people," he said.

"He reaffirms his commitment to working for peace and stability on the Korean peninsula and helping the people in the DPRK," Nesirky said, using the initials of the country's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The United States considers North Korea's rocket launches to be veiled tests of technology intended for long-range missiles aimed at American targets.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Man accused of selling nuclear tech to Iran

A Swedish man has been charged with breaking international sanctions against Iran after allegedly trying to export advanced technical material typically used in uranium-enrichment activities, officials said Tuesday.

Police did not disclose the identity of the 31-year-old, who is accused of attempting to sell 11 state-of-the-art valves to Iran in February and April last year. The alleged attempt was discovered when Swedish custom officials made a random check of a shipment that contained dual-use products — material that can be used for civilian functions as well as for the production of weapons of mass destruction and other weaponry — and seemed to be destined for Iran.

According to national broadcaster SVT, the cargo's official destination was labeled as Dubai, but a closer look showed that the final destination was Iran.

Iran insists that it has never tried to develop nuclear weapons. The country claims it is producing enriched uranium for nuclear fuel and research purposes and denies it is attempting to make weapons-grade uranium.

The suspect, who allegedly operated out of a small company in Lund in southern Sweden, has denied any criminal activity, prosecutors said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Overkill

"The properties of the materials are so advanced that it would be overkill to use them (in the oil industry)."

Swedish nonproliferation expert Daniel Nord, pointing out that because of their corrosive resistance, the valves are typically used for uranium-enrichment activities.

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West Bank. Israeli settlement proposals cause tensions to rise

The Palestinians will ask the UN Security Council to call for an Israeli settlement freeze, President Mahmoud Abbas and his advisers decided on Tuesday, as part of an escalating showdown over Israel's new plans to build thousands more homes on war-won land in and around Jerusalem.

Such construction will destroy any lingering hopes of setting up a Palestinian state, Abbas aides warned, as international anger over the settlement construction snowballed.

Israel announced the new plans after the UN last week recognized a state of Palestine in the West Bank, Gaza and east Jerusalem — lands Israel occupied in 1967 — as a non-member observer.

The plans include 3,000 more homes for Jews in the West Bank and east Jerusalem, as well as preparations for construction of an especially sensitive project near Jerusalem, known as E-1.

Separately, Israel is moving forward with two major settlement projects in east Jerusalem. Israel would build more than 4,200 apartments in the two areas, Ramat Shlomo and Givat Hamatos.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Peace at stake

A Palestinian official says construction would kill peace talks between the two feuding nations.

- **Some Palestinian officials have raised the possibility of asking the European Union to reconsider its trade agreements with Israel**

Protesters chant slogans and wave national flags against President Mohammed Morsi on Tuesday in Tahrir Square in Cairo. MAYA ALLERUZZO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Protests in Egypt threaten rule

Cairo. Crowds chant against President Morsi's seizure of unrestricted powers

Quoted

"The same way we brought down Mubarak in 18 days, we can bring down Morsi in less."

Ziad Oleimi, prominent rights activist, speaking to the crowds over a loudspeaker.

More than 100,000 Egyptians protested outside the presidential palace in Cairo on Tuesday, fuelling tensions over Islamist leader Mohammed Morsi's seizure of nearly unrestricted powers and the adoption by his allies of a controversial draft constitution.

The outpouring of anger across the Egyptian capital, the Mediterranean port of Alexandria and a string of other cities pointed to a prolonged standoff between the president and a newly united opposition.

Morsi's opponents, long fractured by bickering and competing egos, have been reenergized since he announced decrees last month that place him above oversight of any kind, including by the courts, and provide immunity to two key bodies dominated by his allies: The 100-member panel drafting the constitution and parliament's upper chamber.

The decrees have led to charges that Morsi's powers turned him into a "new pharaoh."

The large turnout at Tuesday's protests — dubbed "The Last Warning" by organizers — signalled sustained momentum for the opposition, which brought out at least 200,000 protesters to Cairo's Tahrir Square a week ago and a comparable number on Friday to demand that Morsi rescind the decrees.

The huge scale of the protests has dealt a blow to the legitimacy of the new constitution, which Morsi's opponents contend allows religious authorities too much influence over legislation, threatens to restrict freedom of expression and opens the door to Islamist control over day-to-day life.

What the revived opposition has yet to make clear is what it will do next: Campaign for a "no" vote on the draft constitution in a nationwide referendum set for Dec. 15, or call on Egyptians to boycott the vote. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Quebec Premier Pauline Marois walks in front of the Quebec and Olympic flags Tuesday at the legislature in Quebec City. A motion to remove the Canadian flag had been rejected a few minutes before and still the flag wasn't back up.
JACQUES BOISSINOT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

PQ loses bid to take down Canadian flag in national assembly

Quebec flag flap. The Maple Leaf will remain in the Red Room of the legislature — despite separatist efforts

The Maple Leaf is staying put in one of the main rooms at Quebec's national assembly.

An attempt by the Parti Quebecois to remove the Canadian flag failed Tuesday, with the two main opposition parties voting to defeat the minority government.

That means the flag will continue to adorn what is known as the Red Room of the legislature.

The room once housed Quebec's now-defunct upper chamber and is still used for legislative committees and ceremonies like a cabinet swearing-in.

The flag has never stood in the legislature in either of the previous two eras that the pro-independence party held office. This time the PQ's intentions prompted a backlash, with the party receiving criticism in both social and news media.

It was at the swearing-in of the new PQ cabinet several weeks ago that people noticed the flag had been removed.

The Canadian flag has had an on-again, off-again presence in the Red Room of the Quebec legislature.

It is the only visible spot in the building where the emblem hangs.

Marois' government made a formal request to remove it last month, on the 36th anniversary of the election of the first Parti Quebecois government in 1976.

That year, then-PQ premier Rene Levesque was the first to put the Quebec flag in the legislative chamber, the Blue Room, where the daily debates are held and votes are cast.

In 1983, he put the Fleur-de-lis in the Red Room.

The Maple Leaf was eventually added to the Red Room by federalist Liberal premier Robert Bourassa when he returned to power in 1985.

It was removed by successive PQ premiers before being brought back in 2003 after Jean Charest's Liberals took power.

Neither federalist premier, Bourassa or Charest, put the Maple Leaf in the legislative chamber, fearing a backlash from nationalists.

The vote on the Red Room Canadian flag came a week or so after an online poll asked respondents whether they considered different national symbols very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not important at all as sources of personal or collective pride in Canada.

The survey said that when it came to the flag, 66 per cent of Quebec respondents answered yes — with 29 per cent calling it very important and 37 per cent calling it somewhat important.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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CFIB report. Five extra public sector sick days cost up to $3.5B yearly

A new report suggests public sector employees in Canada take nearly five more sick, disability and personal days per year than Canadians working in the private sector.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business says those extra days cost up to $3.5 billion per year, noting some public sector workers can bank unused sick days, then take a lump-sum payment or use the days to retire early.

The CFIB says federal government employees take the most time off, averaging 15.2 sick, disability and personal days per year compared to 12.9 days in the overall public sector and 8.2 days in the overall private sector.

In its report, the CFIB calls for sick day allotments to be aligned with those offered in the private sector and for the accumulation of unused sick days to be discontinued.

"I don't think anybody believes that public sector workers just get sick more often, yet something makes them feel entitled to more time off," said CFIB president and CEO Dan Kelly. "Obviously, we want to be compassionate when people are truly not well, but the current system has entrenched a feeling of entitlement to those days off that (have) very little to do with being sick."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Private sector figures

6.7

Employees in businesses with fewer than 20 employees averaged 6.7 days off, while those in firms with more than 500 employees took 9.1 days, which is still lower than the public sector average.

U.K. PM warns editors to take action on press regulator

Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron meets children at a primary school in London on Tuesday. Earlier, Cameron warned newspaper editors they must act quickly to set up an independent press regulator in the wake of a media ethics scandal. NEIL HALL/PA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Banking. BMO focuses on growing U.S. operations

The Bank of Montreal has set its sights on growing its U.S. business, it said Tuesday after spending more than a year overhauling and revamping the operations.

BMO chief executive Bill Downe said the bank is launching a massive advertising blitz now that the integration of Milwaukee-based Marshall and Ilsley Corp. is complete.

"This month we're blanketing our U.S. footprint with some of the strongest advertising and promotions the bank has ever developed; online, outdoor, broadcast and in-branch," Downe said on a conference call with analysts.

Q4 results

- **Doubling up.** The Bank of Montreal reported a fourth-quarter profit of $1.08 billion on Tuesday as its capital markets business more than doubled its earnings compared with a year ago.

BMO doubled down on its U.S. operations when it acquired Marshall and Ilsley last year for $4.1 billion US in a bid to give it the scale and reach needed to compete south of the border. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ottawa

BoC maintains interest rates will need to rise

The Bank of Canada is holding fast to its view that the economy is poised for a comeback and that interest rates will need to rise at some point in the future.

The central bank offered no surprises in its Tuesday interest rate announcement, keeping the policy-setting rate at one per cent for the 18th consecutive announcement date.

Bank governor Mark Carney kept in place his future guidance that in all likelihood rates are more likely to rise in the future than fall, or even stay the same. "Although underlying momentum appears slightly softer than previously anticipated, the pace of economic growth is expected to pick up through 2013," the bank said in its policy statement. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Calgary

Canadian Pacific to cut 4,500 jobs

Canadian Pacific says it will eliminate some 4,500 jobs by 2016 and expects more than a third of those cuts to come by year-end as the struggling railroad works to bring down its operating costs. The Calgary-based company said reductions will be achieved through job cuts, attrition and reducing contractors.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Washington

Plans for avoiding fiscal cliff far apart

Both U.S. President Barack Obama and Republicans in Congress now have laid out some specifics of their vision for stepping back from the "fiscal cliff" budget crisis, but the plans are vastly different and leave politicians far from agreement with a deadline less than a month away.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

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TSX 12,137.18 (-32.56)

OIL $88.50 US (-59¢)

GOLD $1,695.80 US (-$25.30)

Natural gas: $3.54 US (-5¢)
Dow Jones: 12,951.78 (-13.82)

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A cutout of Vancouver Canucks' goalie Roberto Luongo sits in the window of the team's store at Rogers Arena as a worker sweeps up outside in this Sept. 16 photo. A report by Moneris found that while spending near hockey venues has dropped since the lockout began, merchants away from arenas have benefited. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

NHL lockout causing both pain and gain for businesses: Report

Host cities. Drinking establishments near arenas hardest hit as fans spend elsewhere

The NHL lockout is forcing some merchants near hockey arenas into the penalty box, but is giving power plays to others further afield as fans spend their money at alternative eating and drinking holes, says a report issued Tuesday.

The report by credit and debit card processor Moneris found that overall spending at venues near arenas in Winnipeg, Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Calgary has decreased more than 11 per cent from a year ago on a game day.

Drinking establishments are being hit the hardest, with business falling nearly 35 per cent. Restaurants are taking a nearly 11 per cent hit, followed by fast-food outlets, which are down almost seven per cent compared to a game day in 2011.

Edmonton fast food outlets are facing the largest impact with business falling 27 per cent.

Spending near Montreal's Bell Centre is down more than 21 per cent, followed by a 17 per cent drop in business near Toronto's Air Canada Centre.

Merchants away from arenas, however, have been benefiting from the 11-week labour dispute, with spending up 5.4 per cent from a game day in 2011.

"While overall spending at establishments near hockey arenas is down, it would appear that Canadians are simply choosing to stick closer to home," said president and CEO Jim Baumgartner.

Spending in bars further afield is up nearly 19 per cent while fast food business grew 11.5 per cent and was up nearly five per cent in restaurants, in line with overall spending increases in the third quarter.

Moneris surveyed the game-day spending of about 750 of its customers in the hockey host cities.

"The ones that were affected very heavily are the ones that are in the same two postal codes as the arenas," vice-president Malcolm Fowler said in an interview.

Molson Coors Brewing Co. and owners of the La Cage aux Sports chain have both recently noted that the labour dispute has reduced revenues.

As a league sponsor, Molson Coors said it will seek financial redress from the NHL once the dispute is resolved.

The Montreal Canadiens won't discuss the financial impact of the lockout, but vice-president Donald Beauchamp noted that all 100 employees, including president Geoff Molson, have taken a 20 per cent pay cut by working four days a week.

Some 1,000 part-time employees who normally work during home games now only work during other events at the arena.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

By the numbers

0.1%

BMO Nesbitt Burns deputy chief economist Douglas Porter has estimated that a cancelled NHL season would trim just 0.1 per cent from the gross domestic product as people spend their hockey money elsewhere.

Lockout impact

27% Edmonton fast food outlets are facing the largest impact with business falling 27 per cent.

21% Spending near Montreal's Bell Centre is down more than 21 per cent.

17% Business near Toronto's Air Canada Centre has dropped by 17 per cent.

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OH, CHRISTMAS TREE, WHY DO YOU CAUSE SUCH A DEBATE?

JUST SAYIN'
Paul Sullivan
metronews.ca

There's an important dialogue going on in households around the world right about now.

And it goes like this:

He: So, where do you think the tree should go this year?

She: You know, hon, I really think we should bite the bullet and buy an artificial tree this year. Those real trees are so messy. They drop all their needles and are full of bugs. Squirrels, too, maybe.

He: The trouble with artificial trees is that they look as if they were put together on craft day at kindergarten using toilet brushes and spray paint.

She: That's not true! The new ones are pretty nice and they come with lights. All you have to do is take them out of the box, plug them in and voila: Instant Christmas.

He: I try to stay away from anything with the word "instant" in it: Instant coffee … instant mashed potatoes.

She: But real trees are so expensive. To get one that looks any good, you have to spend at least $50.

He: The only artificial ones that look any good at all cost seven or eight hundred bucks. At that price, it will take an eternity of *instant* Christmases to amortize the cost.

The pine needle in my side

"The only artificial ones that look any good at all cost seven or eight hundred bucks. At that price, it will take an eternity of *instant* Christmases to amortize the cost."

Sound of quaint landline ringing.

Offspring: Hi Daddy! What's up?

He: Hi. Your mother is lobbying for an artificial tree again this year.

Offspring: Nooooo! It wouldn't be Christmas. The Geneva Convention specifically calls for a real tree to be sacrificed as a solstice offering. Have you called the Xmas police?

He: Not yet. She does make a certain amount of sense about the mess, which I end up cleaning every year. And it's harder now because I have to toss the old tree over the balcony.

Offspring: Don't be silly, Daddy. You can get one of those noble firs. They don't lose their needles until Easter and only cost $100 or so.

He: Is that all?

Offspring: And you get to save Christmas. I know I can count on you, Daddy. Gotta run! Ciao!

She: Was that our daughter?

He: Yes. She accused you of trying to ruin Christmas.

She: Same old, same old. By the way, I've been thinking: We could get one of those Charlie Brown trees from Ikea. I think they come free with a dozen meatballs.

He: I believe that's Lille Karl in Sweden. And his dog is called Snobben. At least there would be no place for the bugs to hide.

She: You can't help showing off, can you?

He: So where do you think the tree should go this year?

Road bump in the baby lodge

CHRIS JACKSON/GETTY IMAGES

Royal pregnancy

Police not fooled by princely mask

A man wearing a Prince William mask is escorted away by a policeman at the King Edward VII Hospital in London, England. Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, remains in hospital after Monday's announcement of her pregnancy and the fact she is suffering from hyperemesis gravidarum or acute morning sickness. METRO

#royalbaby

Messages from the womb, under 140 characters

This man isn't the only royal impostor caught up in baby-mania. Spoof Twitter accounts of the unborn child are getting attention.

"CURRENT STATUS: DARK IN HERE, WILL UPDATE," tweeted @RoyalFoetus, which has 6,800+ followers. A rival, @RoyalFetus (10,000+ followers), said: "I may not have bones yet, but I'm already more important than everyone reading this." METRO

What are the odds?

8-1

Bettors in Britain have a range of possible wagers from betting agencies William Hill, Ladbrokes and Paddy Power. Paddy Power will give you 8-1 odds for betting on twins; 100-1 for triplets; and for quadruplets or more you'll get 500-1 odds.

Online

For the latest go to metronews.ca.

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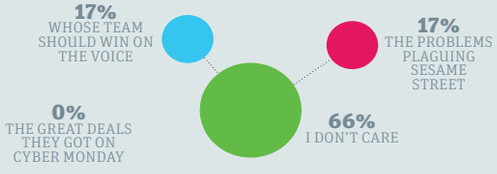
What do you think Barack Obama and rival Mitt Romney really talked about when they met for lunch last week?



Twitter

@the_art_war_: Favorite run on Vancouver's local mts? I would say Moons @ cypress. On a good pow day I could do that run all day.

@Sam_Chow_: Lunch break walk around Stanley park. Man runs past wearing only a speedo. Good stuff #speedo #stanleypark #vancouver #lunch

@Erica_Sigurdson: @patterballs if you don't have a coffee in your hand while you walk through Vancouver -one will be assigned to you

@MeganDubs: "Im not cheering until she says 'Whats up Vancouver' " - @theaddysmith at Taylor Swifts last concert. We'll cheering loud again JUNE 29th!!

@jonculshaw: One thing I learned in Vancouver is that jeans, a denim shirt and denim jacket worn together is called a 'Canadian tuxedo'

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On top of the cheesy charts

Barry Manilow has become just the fifth artist to score 50 hits on Billboard's Adult Contemporary chart. The sentimental performer entered the rarified mix thanks to a cushy rendition of Santa Claus Is Coming to Town off his new Christmas album. As any Fanilow worth their One Night Live! One Last Time! concert tee could tell you, it's been four decades since the romantic balladeer first cracked the easy listening chart in November of 1974 with Mandy (the first of 13 of Manilow's ditties that would soar to No. 1 on the chart). We cosy up with the AC music titans voted most easy on the ears.

MIKE DOJC
scene@metronews.ca

Johnny Mathis

AC chart appearances: 49

While just one chart appearance shy of an official 50 entries club membership, this velvet voiced crooner pioneered the greatest hits album format. 1958's Johnny's Greatest Hits earned Mathis a spot in the Guinness Book of World Record.

Elvis Presley

AC chart appearances: 53

You can thank the king, and thank him very much for assuring that the rhythm and blues, rock and roll and gospel charts got all shook up during his reign from the 1950s through the '70s until his untimely passing.

Easy Listening Cred: Can't Help Falling in Love, Suspicious Minds, It's Now or Never.

Neil Diamond

AC chart appearances: 58

While millennials know this jazzy vocalist as the guy who sings Sweet Caroline, Diamond has written a treasure trove of soft rock gems. He's sold over 125 million records during his five decades on the scene. Easy Listening Cred: America, Heartlight, Forever in Blue Jeans.

Elton John

AC chart appearances: 68

In high school, this bespectacled pop piano prodigy should have been voted "most likely to be heard in an animated movie."

With lyricist Bernie Taupin in tow, the rocket man launched one hit after the other into radio orbit since Your Song off his sophomore album cracked the top 10 in 1970.

Barbra Streisand

AC chart appearances: 64

Trends, smrends, Babs eschewed 'em all, including rhinoplasty, fearing a nose job would ruin her voice. Never following suit with the hipsters of her heyday, Streisand was adult contemporary long before the term was coined.

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Child star. Beasts of the Southern Wild actress has lots to smile about

Actress Quvenzhane Wallis stars in Beasts of the Southern Wild. CHRIS HELLER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

She was just nominated for a Spirit Award for her leading role in Beasts of the Southern Wild, and there's buzz that Golden Globe and Oscar nods could be next.

But these days, Quvenzhane Wallis is more concerned about picking up long division in her math class than trophies in Hollywood.

"I actually had to learn what an Oscar was," Quvenzhane said over a lunch of fried shrimp and crawfish at the nine-year-old's favourite seafood restaurant in her hometown of Houma, La., about 100 kilometres southeast of New Orleans.

Quvenzhane said she was shown a picture of what an Oscar looks like and came up with a nickname.

"I call him 'the golden man,'" she said, crossing her arms across her chest emulating the posture of the iconic statue.

If given the opportunity to go to the Oscars, Quvenzhane certainly knows what to expect.

The fourth-grader has walked many red carpets since Beasts first premiered at the Sundance Film Festival.

There, it won a grand jury prize, and then played at the Cannes fest, where the film took the respected Camera d'Or prize.

Quvenzhane says she would like to be a dentist when she grows up "to see people smile," but won't be giving up acting.

But whether she or the film will be nominated for an Academy Award, "that's not in my head," she said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Is Gerard Butler a pro bad decision maker?

New movie. Richard Crouse tries to look at the brighter spots in the actor's career with another romantic comedy waiting in the wings

IN FOCUS
Richard Crouse
scene@metronews.ca

Are there five more terrifying words in the English language than: new Gerard Butler romantic comedy? Butler is a good actor who makes lots of bad movies, but his track record in the rom com department is particularly dire.

Critics hate these movies, calling the handsome Scottish actor's attempts at mixing love and comedy "instantly grating," and "embarrassingly limited." Only Katherine Heigl (Butler's co-star in The Ugly Truth, called "ugly-ass crap" by Rolling Stone) has a worse track record.

This weekend he stars in Playing for Keeps, the true story of a former sports star who pulls his life together through romance and, let's hope, comedy.

The reviews have yet to come in for Playing for Keeps, but let's hope it breaks his rom com track record and delivers some mushy, funny fun.

Playing for Keeps, starring Gerard Butler, opens this weekend. HANDOUT

Slammed in the press

A few years ago the website Gawker placed Butler on movie star probation, calling him a "professional bad decision maker."

Rather than dwell on the bad stuff, in this column I'll look at his more interesting performances — and no, that Jennifer Aniston movie won't be included.

Butler became famous in 2002, with big roles in Reign of Fire and Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life, opposite Angelina Jolie. Then he developed into a crossover star, taking roles in everything from sci-fi flicks (Timeline), to musicals (The Phantom of the Opera) and even a rendering of the Anglo-Saxon epic poem Beowulf (Beowulf & Grendel).

The film that turned him into a heartthrob, but one with serious dramatic chops, was Dear Frankie, a four hankie tearjerker about a single mother who resorts to trickery to keep the memory of her late husband alive in her son's mind.

It was his next movie, however, that made him (and his meticulously crafted six-pack) a superstar. In 300 he's King Leonidas, a Spartan who led 300 soldiers against the might of the Persian army. It's the film equivalent of a heavy metal concert — loud, brutal and completely uncompromising — and it made him an action hero.

A few years ago, the website Gawker placed Butler on movie star probation, calling him a "professional bad decision maker" alongside Cuba Gooding Jr. and John Travolta, but Hollywood hasn't been all bad for Butler.

Post 300 highlights include playing a charming mobster in the violent Guy Ritchie flick RocknRolla, voicing Stoick the Vast, the chieftain of a Viking tribe in the animated How to Train Your Dragon and Coriolanus, a modern dress version of a 1608 play by William Shakespeare.

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John Travolta

Travolta's alleged lover sues star

A man who told the National Enquirer that he had a "steamy affair" with John Travolta while working as his pilot from 1981 to 1987 is now suing the actor, insisting he never signed a confidentiality agreement that would bar him from talking to the media about his time with the actor, according to TMZ.

The man, Doug Gotterba, claims Travolta's lawyer, Marty Singer, threatened a lawsuit after the story was published. Singer maintains that Gotterba's termination agreement included a confidentiality clause and that the former employee is just out for attention. "Mr. Gotterba obviously filed this lawsuit to get his 15 minutes of fame," Singer says. "We plan to get this meritless case promptly dismissed."

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Random sources state the obvious about Will and Kate

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

The news of Will and Kate's impending arrival has the tabloids in a tizzy — and scrambling for anyone, anyone at all, to be quoted about it.

I've compiled a sampling of the best of these random, mostly anonymous sources, all of whom state how Kate and Will will be good parents (as if anyone is going to say that she's going to become a baby-smacking alcoholic and he's planning on raising the baby as a racist).

The best of the bunch, with an added bonus of Snooki (say what?) commentary:

"Kate will be a firm but fair mother. Kate will let her children have fun and freedom, but she will also make sure they do what is best for them." — A "pal" of the Duchess of Cambridge, per Us Weekly.

"I can see William wanting to take time off in the modern paternity-leave style, so that he bonds with his child." — A "family friend" to dailymail.co.uk

"(Kate and Will) both try to be as normal as possible in their private lives. ... Everyone's always said what great parents they'll be, since they are such a caring couple and very relaxed. They will lavish love on their children." — Jessica Hay, a "childhood acquaintance" of Kate's, to Australian tabloid New Idea

"I'm sure she will be an amazing mom." — Snooki to the New York Daily News

Perry hides from Brand under the table

Katy Perry

A nice dinner out at the Beverly Hills Polo Lounge with John Mayer turned awkward for Katy Perry when her ex-husband, Russell Brand, showed up. Just how awkward are we talking about? Perry reportedly crouched under her table and hid just to avoid Brand, according to Us Weekly. "The hostess almost seated Russell next to Kay," a source says. "Kay's face was like, 'Oh s—!'" And while the seating disaster was averted and Brand was set up elsewhere in the restaurant, he apparently needed to satisfy his curiosity upon learning of Perry's presence. "On his way to the bathroom, he looked at [John and Katy] through a window," the source adds.

Twitter

@ABFoundation
I'm gonna write a book. A novel. It's called A PRIVATE MISUNDERSTANDING. Can you guess what it's about? Can you guess what happens?

@kathygriffin
I bet Justin Bieber can blow a mean whistle

@ParisHilton
Just landed in Dubai. Next stop New York City.

@RebelWilson
I am going to go on a new cleanse - my weekend cleanse of cutting everything out of my diet except for chocolate DID NOT WORK!

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LIFE 3

5 things every volunteer should know

Since 1985, the United Nations has recognized the contributions of volunteers around the world on Dec. 5, International Volunteer Day. Metro talks to Cuso International and Free The Children, international development organizations that send volunteers overseas to share their expertise with partners in other nations. Here, they offer five things to consider before taking the leap into overseas volunteering.

METRO NEWS
life@metronews.ca

Visual artist Stephanie Stoker (centre) works with young adults in Peru. CUSO INTERNATIONAL

Choose your organization carefully

Some organizations require you to pay your own way, and often include a fee; volunteering may be a fundraising mechanism for a development project. For others, volunteering is fundamental to their programs, and those serving take on professional roles in longer-term development.

SEAN KELLY, CUSO INTERNATIONAL

A volunteer trip is just the beginning

Volunteer travel is a life-changing experience for both the traveller and the developing communities in which they work. Further ignite the global change maker in you by taking your experience one step further when you return home. Spread the message of your transformative experience to others, helping to spark the change within them. **CRAIG KIELBURGER, FOUNDER, FREE THE CHILDREN**

For young people, volunteering means being engaged, empowered and part of a team. FREE THE CHILDREN

Work alongside the local community

Often times, travellers volunteer in isolation from the local community in which they are working in. Make sure to travel with organizations that have strong partnerships with local communities and governments. This enables you to ensure you are committing to a project that promotes long term and sustainable change.

CRAIG KIELBURGER, FOUNDER, FREE THE CHILDREN

School-building with local children creates a lasting bond for volunteers. FREE THE CHILDREN

Bairu Sium, left, a Toronto high school teacher, assists his colleagues in education in Tanzania. SCOTT PORTINGALE/CUSO INTERNATIONAL

Know why you're going

Volunteers want to help and make a difference, as the cliché goes, but most know this isn't a purely selfless act. You will learn new skills, broaden your horizons and come to better understand yourself and the world. And that's all OK. Reflect on your motivations. You want to help reduce global poverty or protect the natural world, but what else? Have you always wanted to travel, but not as a tourist? Work with kids? When you understand your motivations, you'll be in a better position to choose the option that is right for you. **SEAN KELLY, CUSO INTERNATIONAL**

Don't assume you know it all

Decades of successful and not-so-successful development assistance shows that projects parachuted in from above, without consultation or roots in local communities, usually do not have long-term benefits. You will want to help build the social infrastructure that is so critical to any nation's future.

SEAN KELLY, CUSO INTERNATIONAL

Augustina Aporte, who lives in Bolivia, works with the Chiquitania Forest Conservation Foundation on sustainability projects. MIGUEL HORTIGUELA/CUSO INTERNATIONAL

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Laughing in the frigid face of Old Man Winter

Festival fun. Bundle up and embrace Canadian culture at one of the many outdoor events taking place this season

The coming weeks are a time of hibernation for many Canadians. As temperatures plummet, it's only natural to want to huddle indoors near the warm glow of a fireplace or big-screen television and wait for the depth of winter to pass.

But for many people, it's a time of celebration. It's also a chance to show Old Man Winter that we Canadians can still face winter head-on, like the early settlers did with an axe, a tent and some hearty food and drink. For a few hours, anyway.

"Even if it's -40 C, people will be out there. They really want to enjoy winter and they embrace it," says Irina Ivanov-Bissonnette, spokesperson for the Festival du Voyageur.

The festival is held every year in mid-February in the St. Boniface neighbourhood of Winnipeg and brings visitors back to the early 19th century, when a small fort on the very site played an important role in the fur trade. There are similar festivals held across the country in January and February, including the Voyageur Winter Carnival in Thunder Bay, Ont., the Yukon Sourdough Rendez-Vous in Whitehorse, and the biggest one of all — the Quebec Winter Carnival.

They have a common theme — instead of hiding from winter, get outside, interact with hundreds or thousands of others and celebrate the often cold, harsh history of Canada's development. The Yukon Sourdough Rendez-Vous bills itself as "the only legal cure for the cabin fever blues."

"We want to encourage people to embrace the weather, embrace that time of the year," said Rendez-Vous Society executive director Jon Solberg. "It's about actually getting out in the community and getting active in different events that are going on."

Festival-goers at Rendez-Vous, scheduled to run Feb. 21 to 24 in 2013, may find themselves carrying large bags of flour on their backs, throwing an axe or racing in snowshoes — all in temperatures that can dip below -20 C. The festival celebrates the Yukon gold rush and recreates, to some extent, how people lived in the late 1800s. "It's celebrating the pioneers," Solberg said.

At the Festival du Voyageur, the focus is on 1815, a time when the Hudson Bay Company and the North West Company were vying for control of the fur trade. Actors in period costume inside a recreated Fort Gibraltar greet you as if you have stepped back in time. Any mention of Canada is likely to be met with a quizzical expression and a reminder that Canada is to the East. You, monsieur, are in Rupert's Land.

The period actors show visitors how to make tools, fur coats and other goods, and how meals were prepared and food was stored in an isolated Prairie outpost.

There is also a bit of poetic licence to the festival's take on history. Just outside the fort, period actors play out a battle between French- and English-speaking soldiers that looks like something from the Plains of Abraham in Quebec. The battle portrays a skirmish between the forces of Lord Selkirk and La Verendrye that never actually happened. Selkirk, a Scottish settler, and La Verendrye, a French explorer, lived at different times of the west's development.

The festival, now in its 44th year, is the largest Francophone festival in western Canada, attracting about 95,000 people over 10 days. The 2013 edition is scheduled to run Feb. 15 to 24.

Not everything about the festival is a throwback. At night, live music, much of it modern rock and folk, is performed inside huge heated tents. Francophone groups from across Canada are featured. The licensed bar serves modern brands of beer along with caribou, an old-time blend of red wine, whisky and maple sugar. And if the weather does turn particularly nasty, there are options.

At the Festival du Voyageur, the temperatures have sometimes risen to the point where snow and ice sculptures melt. Other years, temperatures have dipped below -40 C, leaving all but the bravest souls scurrying for cover in heated tents.

In Whitehorse, such temperatures are rare. But two years ago, the thermometer dipped to -25 C and a fierce wind blew at 40 kilometres an hour. "With our main performance tent, we put heat in there," said Solberg. "We warm it up pretty good. It's a bit of a windbreak and a shelter for people to go to."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

If you go...

- **The Festival du Voyageur.** Is held in Whittier Park, east of downtown Winnipeg. festivalvoyageur.mb.ca
- **Rendez-Vous.** There are several direct flights to Whitehorse from Vancouver. Travel from most other cities is not non-stop. yukonrendezvous.com

Children hang out with Leo LaTuque, the mascot of the Festival du Voyageur. DAN HARPER/THE CANADIAN PRESS HANDOUT

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Impress your guests' taste buds with sophisticated Parmesan Custard Cup

Parmesan Custard

1. In food processor, combine light cream cheese, whipping cream and eggs. Pulse until smooth, about 2 minutes.

2. Add Parmesan, salt and pepper; continue to pulse until smooth, about 1 minute. Divide Parmesan mix into each of the eight greased glass ramekins (approx. 1/4 cup or 50 ml in each)

Spinach Layer

1. Put spinach over strainer in the sink and gently press to remove water.

2. In skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat, add garlic; cook, stirring until aromatic, about 1 min. Stir in spinach, green onions, salt and pepper. Cook to combine flavours, 4 mins. Remove from heat and spoon a generous 1/4 cup (50 ml) spinach mix on top of Parmesan custard, pressing gently.

Roasted Red Pepper and Salad Greens

1. In bowl, stir red pepper slices and garlic. Cover tops of spinach with a layer of roasted red pepper. The peppers should cover the spinach. Smooth tops.

2. Place custard cups on large rimmed baking sheet and bake in 375 F (190 C) oven until set, about 30 mins. Let cool slightly.

3. Meanwhile, in bowl, whisk together olive oil, vinegar, Dijon, salt and pepper. Toss with mixed greens.

4. Run thin knife around edges of glass ramekins. Invert onto salad plates and top each with small amount of mixed greens and serve. Or top each cup with a handful of mixed greens and serve. **EGG FARMERS OF ONTARIO**

Parmesan Custard Cup

This recipe makes 8 custard cups. EGG FARMERS OF ONTARIO

Ingredients

Parmesan Custard
- 1 pkg (250g/8oz) light cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup (125 ml) whipping cream
- 3 eggs
- 3/4 cup (175 ml) grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 tsp (1 ml) each salt and freshly ground pepper

Spinach Layer
- 2 pkgs each (300g) frozen chopped spinach, thawed
- 2 tbsp (25 ml) vegetable oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 green onions, thinly sliced
- 1/4 tsp (1 ml) each salt and freshly ground pepper

Roasted Red Pepper Layer
- 1 jar (340 ml) roasted red peppers, drained and thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic

Salad
- 1/4 cup (50 ml) olive oil
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) red wine vinegar
- 2 tsp (10 ml) Dijon mustard
- salt and pepper to taste
- 3 cups (750 ml) mixed salad greens

Drink of the Week

Apple Cider Punch

Apple cider is one of those drinks that is automatically associated with winter and the holiday season. This version gets an added touch with grapefruit juice.

- 2 oz Bombay Sapphire
- 2.5 oz apple cider
- 1 oz grapefruit juice
- 1 egg white
- 1 oz corn syrup
- 1 dash Angustura bitters

Combine all ingredients into a shaker, dry shake. Add ice and shake again. Double strain into glass. Garnish with apple slice.

RECIPE AND PHOTO COURTESY OF BOMBAY SAPPHIRE

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Student voice

Signing yourself up for success

Shaheerah Kayani
Student
Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)
University of Guelph-Humber
TalentEgg.ca

Shaheerah Kayani PROVIDED

Through my high school business club, I participated in BizAcademy; a one-week apprenticeship program/team-based competition sponsored by Salesforce.com, an innovative cloud-computing organization. Here, I collaborated with employees and mentors to create mock business plans and client presentations. The following year, being a BizAcademy participant made me eligible for a Salesforce.com internship, which I applied for and got. The year after that, I received a $2,500 scholarship courtesy of Salesforce.com.

Where I am now
Today, I am employed part-time on-campus as an office assistant for the Student Life Department, and as a business peer tutor. I am also part of the school's advertising club (GHAMA) and investment council (GHIC). I am actively searching and applying for student jobs in the finance/banking industry.

My advice for students and recent grads
My advice for fellow students and recent grads is to join clubs, associations, volunteer and network with professors and university staff. Simple activities such as club involvement, networking, attending conferences and summer volunteerism can lead to bigger and better opportunities in the future. And finally, it can truly help if you have an online presence — whether it is LinkedIn, a professional blog or another creative online community, such as Behance.

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Optimize your first office experience

Placement pointers.
A co-op can easily turn into a full-time career, so work it like you're already on board

VALERIE AGUIAR
TalentEgg.ca

Don't flood your supervisor's inbox with questions when you could have easily asked a co-worker instead. ISTOCK

Going out on a co-op work term for the first time can be daunting. Aside from showing up to work, there's a lot you should do to make a good impression.

Here are seven tips to help you make the most of your experience:

Don't wait until the first day
If you've been given your managers' contact information, get in touch with them. Let her know that you are excited to start and find out if there is anything they can suggest for you to do before you arrive. This gives them a good impression of you before they've even met you.

On your first day, come prepared
Bring in a copy of your job description as well as a notebook. You'll be taking in a lot of new information, so it helps if you write it down. It's also important that you rest up the night before. Even though your job might not be grueling, being in a new environment is, so help your body out by getting some sleep.

Ask questions
Don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it. People know you are new, and in most cases, they'll be more than happy to help. Don't be intimidated if everyone seems busy. They are, but they'll still find a way to help you — if you ask.

Observe
Whenever possible, try to watch and see how your manager and co-workers interact (not in a creepy way, of course!). Maybe people at your company are very casual in conversation. How do people dress? How long do people typically go for lunch? Use what you see to help you fit in.

Ask for work
Each manager is unique. Some might delegate tasks to you, others might only give you work if you ask for it. Don't be afraid to use the phrase, "Would you like me to do anything in particular today?" It always helps to be proactive at work. Plus, you might learn a thing or two.

When in doubt, check it out. If the work you are given is difficult and you aren't sure whether you did it correctly, ask someone to look over your work.

Your manager would definitely prefer this instead of finding a ton of mistakes later. You'll find that as time goes on, you'll feel more confident in your work.

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ISHANI NATH
TalentEgg.ca

Landing a co-op position is great for getting hands-on experience in your field of choice, putting what you've learned in the classroom to practical use in the workplace.

However, there are a few things that you should just simply not do.

To make sure you work it out in style, here are our guidelines for what not to do at your co-op position.

Don't rule out the possibility of shadowing people in other departments if you feel you aren't learning. ISTOCK

Don't slack because it's not a 'real job'

While co-op placements may not be technically a 'real job,' the work and opportunity that they present are no lie.

Showing up on time and working hard will not only make your experience better, it could help turn that placement into a 'real job' in the future.

Don't go in blank

Getting a co-op placement can be challenging, but once you get one, don't just sit back and wait for the ride to begin. Learn about the company you're working for, the different departments that you'll be exposed to and figure out what it is that you want to get out of the experience.

Communicate your goals to your boss and work with them to make sure you make the most of your co-op.

Speak out

@TalentEgg: #Coop students and grads: do you think co-op placements make a big difference in hatching a career? #QuestionOfTheDay

- **@SabaSabati:** Absolutely! U graduate w/ min 9 months experience. Relative to those with 0, it's a huge advantage! + networking opp = priceless
- **@ssimpson3:** It's a great way to add some experience to your resume, network within the industry, and and gain some real world skills
- **@danchukal:** absolutely! Coop gets ur foot in the door and without that exp, you'll be many steps behind those who have. #QuestionOfTheDay
- **@sonjaferne:** My worry as parent is companies cutting back; more students to place & fewer placements these days. So...is it worth it?
- **@ScouseNerd:** absolutely! If my previous program had anything like that I think my life would be much different today
- **@Mathoraa:** Definitely! It not only gives you experience, but also a 'feel' on what the job is like

Don't fly under the radar

When going into a new work environment, it can be tempting to fade into the background. However, since co-ops are short-term placements, you need to utilize your time in the office to leave a positive impression.

Network within the office and get to know your colleagues and your boss.

Once you leave the office, these people can be great industry contacts for future jobs openings or mentorship so build relationships. You want to be on their radar, not flying under it.

Don't whine about your work

Co-op placements may not be the most glamorous of positions. Sometimes you have to do data input and, occasionally, your day may be filled with filing, but that is part of the job. Whining about your work will only make you appear ungrateful for the position that you have.

If you are unhappy and feeling that you're not learning, don't complain, do something about it. Get your work done and talk to your boss about shadowing people in other departments or see if you can help your colleagues with their projects.

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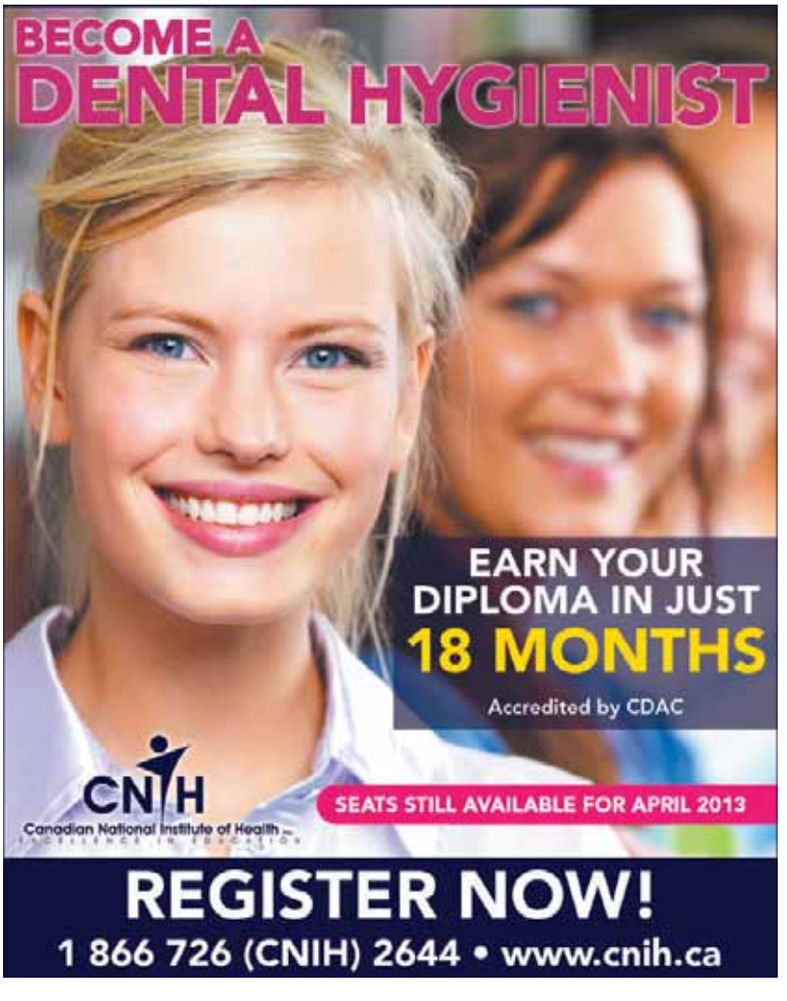
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Abbotsford Heat forward Paul Byron tries to make a pass to Greg Nemisz in front of the San Antonio Rampage net during the first period of Tuesday's American Hockey League game at the Abbotsford Entertainment and Sports Centre. CAM TUCKER/METRO

Heat's party spoiled in OT

AHL. Jason DeSantis scores 35 seconds into extra frame to down Abbotsford squad

CAM TUCKER
cam.tucker@metronews.ca

It was supposed to be Max Reinhart's night.

The 20-year-old Vancouver product had gone 19 games this season without a goal for the Abbotsford Heat, and had been placed in numerous roles on a skilled and deep team.

Reinhart finally busted out of his slump with his first goal of the campaign in the second period; however, San Antonio Rampage defenceman Jason DeSantis stole the show, also with his first goal of the season.

And it turned out to be the winner, as the Rampage squeaked past the Heat 3-2 in overtime before a crowd of 1,719 fans at the Abbotsford Entertainment and Sports Centre.

The two teams will meet again Wednesday night at the AESC.

DeSantis scored the goal 35 seconds into the extra frame on a feed from Jon Rheault, who made his return to Abbotsford after playing the better part of three years for the Heat before signing with the Florida Panthers organization.

Tuesday's game

Rampage	Heat
3	2

The Heat's record on home ice now moves to 9-1-2-1 early in the season, but they have now dropped three of a possible four points in their last two games at the AESC.

The Rampage jumped out of the gate early, going up 7-0 in the shots-on-goal department before the game was even 10 minutes old.

They finished the night with only 17. Meanwhile, the Heat peppered Jacob Markstrom with 34 shots.

The Rampage goalie was good, but wasn't spectacular. The Reinhart goal, a shot from the right faceoff circle seemed to handcuff Markstrom, who also allowed a neat tip from Roman Horak through his legs in the first period.

Don Hay GETTY IMAGES FILE

Giants need veterans to step up

These are difficult days for Don Hay and the Vancouver Giants.

The local Western Hockey League team has lost seven games in a row, and will look to snap the funk Wednesday when it faces its B.C. Division rivals, the Victoria Royals, on the road.

This meeting falls under eerily similar circumstances as the last game between the two teams on Oct. 26.

Vancouver, which was in the midst of a five-game swoon, put forth perhaps its best effort of the season in a convincing 4-1 win at the Pacific Coliseum.

"We were in the same situation. We were pretty desperate to get a win," Hay, the Giants head coach, said Tuesday.

"So, hopefully we come out and play with that kind of urgency against them. It's really important we don't look too far behind this game and really put our energy towards playing well tomorrow."

With the Giants in the midst of a rebuild, it's the veteran players Hay would like to see take initiative to end this streak.

He singled out 20-year-old forward Kale Kessy as someone for the task, adding he'd like to see Kessy and his linemates, Jackson Houck and Cain Franson, build on a better performance from Saturday.

"I thought his line was really strong last game … and we need consistent efforts from all our older players to help the younger players follow," said Hay.

The Giants will return to Vancouver Thursday, then host the Swift Current Broncos Friday at the Pacific Coliseum.

CAM TUCKER/METRO

CFL

Buono careful not to tinker with roster based on emotions

B.C. Lions general manager Wally Buono has had time to reflect on the 2012 season, and the preparations for next year are beginning to take shape.

Also the VP of football operations, Buono will spend this week talking with head coach Mike Benevides and his coaching staff about how next year's roster could look.

The Lions, Grey Cup champs from a year ago, went 13-5 during the 2012 regular season with a veteran-laden team, but were shocked in the Western Final by a more emotionally charged Calgary Stampeders team.

Buono, who handed over the coaching reigns to Benevides during the last off-season, stressed the importance of not making decisions based purely on emotion.

Some time to cool off and ponder the events of the last two weeks of the CFL season — including an uninspired Stamps performance against Toronto in the Grey Cup.

"I've always had that philosophy. That's why I need to sit with the coaches, get their input, their vision of what the team will be like next year," said Buono, who it seems would also like to lock up one or two unspecified but pending free agents before Christmas.

"If we have to take some time on some of the issues, all of the issues … I usually take three, four weeks, let things die down, think the scenarios through and then get comfortable with what you're going to do.

"If you're not comfortable then don't do it."

No matter the comfort level, change is ultimately on its way to the Lions.

There are questions marks surrounding the futures of 37-year-old slot back Geroy Simon, the CFL's all-time leader in receiving yards, 36-year-old centre Angus Reid, as well as an aging secondary that was shelled in last month's playoff loss to Calgary.

"I anticipate changes but every year … even if you look at this year to last year, you have to have changes," said Buono.

"It's inevitable. Maybe harsher, harder, I'm not sure today."

CAM TUCKER/METRO

Herdman asks for patience

Soccer. Upcoming women's camp in Vancouver marks beginning of building toward 2015

Head coach John Herdman coaches the Canadian women's soccer team during the London Olympics. HUSSEIN MALLA/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Canada's women's soccer team may have won bronze at the London Olympics, but coach John Herdman said there will likely be some unfavourable results ahead.

With an eye on the 2015 World Cup and the 2016 Rio Olympics, Herdman is pleading for patience from fans as he brings some new, young talent into the team.

"The team will have to take a step back to move forward again," Herdman said on a conference call. "We're going to have to dampen down the expectations of the public, knowing there's a bigger picture."

Herdman announced his 27-player roster for an upcoming camp that features a mix of returning players and youth players who are getting their first call-up to a senior women's camp.

Star striker Christine Sinclair headlines the 12 players from the London Olympic squad who will attend the Dec. 12-20 camp in the Vancouver area.

Herdman said 60 per cent of his team from London will be over the age of 30 by 2015 when Canada hosts the World Cup, and it's crucial to start investing in the young players coming up, even if it costs the team temporarily on the score sheet.

"We're going to have to expose a lot of young players, very young players, to the international game, and give them caps and playing minutes, which means we may not be able to get the results that you'd want," Herdman said. "But in the long term it will help us be in a much stronger position in 2015 and 2016."

The coach, who was hired after Canada's disastrous last-place finish at the 2011 World Cup, said there's a big gap in the women's soccer system in this country. Few players on Canada's youth teams are moving on to the senior women's side.

"If I go with a team that's 30-plus into that women's World Cup and Olympic Games, all I'm going to do is compound the problem," he said. "I'm going to have to take a real helicopter view and make sure that we pave a pathway, so the next coach in 2019 and 2020 isn't in the same situation as I'm in now."

Herdman said veterans such as Sinclair and Rhian Wilkinson will play key roles in developing Canada's young talent.

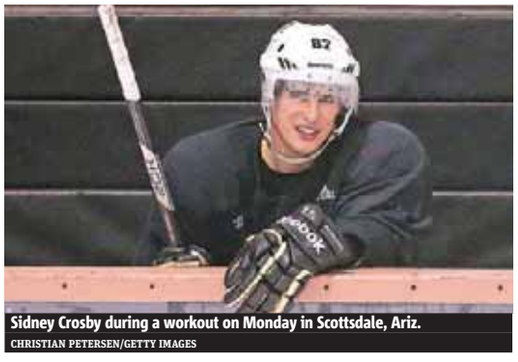
"Those players are absolutely crucial, I think they do realize that they're important now to help leave a legacy," Herdman said. "Some of the senior players may recognize they may not be in the squad in 2015 or '16, but I imagine some of them are prepared to hang around to make sure that they solidify the team's foundation."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Youth influx

- Of the nine young players attending the camp, five were part of this year's under-20 program — Sabrina D'Angelo of Welland, Ont., Adriana Leon of Maple, Ont., Christabel Oduro of Brampton, Ont., Jenna Richardson of Vancouver and Shelina Zadorsky of London, Ont.
- Four played for Canada at the U-17 World Cup this year in Azerbaijan — Kadeisha Buchanan of Mississauga, Ont., Summer Clarke of Richmond, B.C., Ashley Lawrence of Caledon, Ont., and Nichelle Prince of Ajax, Ont.

NHL players, owners negotiate into the night



Sidney Crosby during a workout on Monday in Scottsdale, Ariz. CHRISTIAN PETERSEN/GETTY IMAGES

The latest round of NHL labour talks stretched well into the night.

A group of 18 players and six league owners spent more than five hours in meetings on Tuesday afternoon — and they resumed talks at about 10 p.m. ET after breaking for dinner.

The marathon session was accompanied by whispers of optimism, something that had previously been in short supply with the lockout into its 12th week. Penguins captain Sidney Crosby was among the players who sat across from the small cluster of owners, which included Pittsburgh's Ron Burkle, and those two were said to be strong voices in the room, according to sources.

Neither commissioner Gary Bettman nor NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr took part in the afternoon meetings, although both men were present at the midtown Manhattan hotel and held private sessions with their constituents.

It was hoped that an altered dynamic might break the stalemate in talks. Bettman tabled the idea last week after the sides spent two unsuccessful days with U.S. federal mediators.

Under deadline

There appeared to be a heightened sense of urgency around negotiations with the league's board of governors scheduled to gather Wednesday and more cancellations expected by the end of the week.

Four of the owners in attendance were taking part in their first bargaining session — Burkle, Winnipeg's Mark Chipman, Toronto's Larry Tanenbaum and Tampa's Jeff Vinik — and were accompanied by Boston's Jeremy Jacobs and Calgary's Murray Edwards, both part of the NHL's negotiating committee.

The players in attendance represented a cross-section of the NHLPA's membership.

Stars like Crosby, Jonathan Toews, Ryan Miller and Brad Richards joined the likes of Ron Hainsey, Mathieu Darche and Kevin Westgarth, who have been heavily involved throughout the summer.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Hockey

Americans name invitees for junior selection camp

Alex Galchenyuk GETTY IMAGES FILE

Returning players John Gibson, Jacob Trouba and J.T. Miller as well as some top NHL prospects were among 27 players invited Tuesday to the U.S. junior team pre-training camp. Alex Galchenyuk of the Sarnia Sting, drafted third overall by the Montreal Canadiens in June, as well as Toronto Maple Leafs first-rounder Tyler Biggs and the Ottawa Senators' 21st overall selection Stefan Noesen were also invited. THE CANADIAN PRESS

MLB

Victorino Beantown bound

Free-agent outfielder Shane Victorino and the Red Sox agreed Tuesday to a $39-million, three-year contract, Boston's second big addition during the winter meetings.

The deal is subject to a physical. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Shane Victorino GETTY IMAGES FILE

NBA

Wizards get win No. 2 vs. champs

The Washington Wizards can't beat many teams, but they beat the best: LeBron James and the Miami Heat.

Perhaps inspired by the courtside presence of Redskins rookie quarterback Robert Griffin III, the Wizards doubled their victory total this season with a 105-101 win over the Heat on Tuesday night.

Heat forward LeBron James THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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The 2013 Jetta Hybrid

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Engine

The powertrain consists of a unique 1.4-litre turbo-charged four-cylinder engine worth 150 horse-power and 184 pound-feet of torque. It's paired with a water-cooled electric motor rated at 27 horsepower and 114 pound-feet of torque. Electricity comes from a lithium-ion battery pack located behind the rear seat.

A 1.4 litre, turbo-charged engine

2013 Jetta Hybrid

- **Type.** Four-door, front-wheel-drive compact sedan
- **Engines (hp).** 1.4-litre DOHC I4, turbocharged (150) with 27-hp electric motor (170, net)
- **Transmission.** Seven-speed dual-clutch automated manual
- **Base price (incl.destination).** $29,400

Design

Physical modifications aimed at maximizing the Hybrid's fuel economy include a cold-air intake for the engine plus a special front air dam, side skirts and rear spoiler for the body. The underbody has been fitted with extra panels designed to further reduce air resistance and turbulence.

Fuel economy

The (Direct Shift Gearbox) or DSG also features a sport mode that holds each gear for a longer duration when accelerating, but at the expense of fuel economy that in "normal" mode is estimated at 4.6 l/100 km city and 4.0 highway. That beats the Jetta TDI's 6.7/4.6 highway figures and rivals the slower Civic Hybrid's.

Review. VW's hybrid shift is an economically sound one

MALCOLM GUNN
Wheelbase Media

In a diesel-versus-hybrid comparison that usually pits Volkswagen against the rest of the world, did anyone really see this one coming? Volkswagen building a hybrid? One that beats its own diesel model in fuel economy and comes close in price? Talk about a shift. Talk about the 2013 Jetta Hybrid.

The Jetta's hybrid system generates 170 net horsepower and 184 pound-feet of torque. That's less than a Toyota Camry Hybrid or Ford Fusion Hybrid, but keep in mind that the Jetta is closer in size to the Honda Civic and its estimated 8.6-second zero-to-60-m.p.h (96 km/h) time trumps the Civic Hybrid by 1.5 seconds and the Jetta TDI by half a second.

Assisting the Jetta Hybrid in the performance department is a seven-speed automated manual transmission (Direct Shift Gearbox, or DSG) that features rapid-fire gear changes. It can be left in automatic mode or the driver can go manually.

On the road, the Jetta's hybrid unit can briefly operate on electric power for up to two kilometres and at speeds up to 60 km/h in standard mode, or 70 km/h in E-Mode. However, anything more than a gentle nudge of the pedal will tell the gas engine to join in. The interior is standard Jetta fare, with the exception of a power meter that replaces the tachometer and displays when the Hybrid is in gas or electric mode.

Each model can come equipped with a touch-screen audio system, an energy flow display, a navigation system, a Fender-brand audio package and a rear-view camera, amongst other things. The Hybrid may not displace the cheaper Jetta TDI turbo-diesel as the fuel-saver's VW of choice, but it makes a sportier alternative to mainstream hybrids with their one-dimensional approach to cutting fuel consumption.

The sleek interior is a bonus

The Jetta's roomy trunk

By comparison

1 Toyota Prius
Base price: $27,500

2 Honda Civic Hybrid
Base price: $26,500

3 Kia Optima Hybrid
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Clear any driveshaft issue before you take charge in your Charger

Second Gear.
2006-2010 Dodge Charger

JUSTIN PRITCHARD
Drive@metronews.ca

PHOTO: HANDOUT:

In its last generation, the Dodge Charger was a Canadian-built American sedan that offered up plenty of space, power and feature content. Sharing the same rear-drive 'LX' platform as the Chrysler 300 and Dodge Magnum, it offered up plenty of room, available HEMI V8 power and a comfortable, laid-back ride. Look for feature content including Bluetooth, navigation, heated leather, a sunroof, automatic climate control, remote access, cruise control, power seats and plenty more.

Common Issues

On HEMI-powered units especially, ensure the engine runs smoothly from idle to redline while accelerating lightly, moderately, and at full-throttle where traffic conditions permit. Any lumpiness or hesitation in power delivery could be the result of a computer or sensor-related issue.

A full check of the Charger's on-board electronics is advised, ensuring all motorized or computer-driven features work properly and as expected.

Numerous reports of issues with the Charger's driveshaft have been posted online—so be sure to have this component checked by a mechanic. Signs of a bad driveshaft could include a 'vibration' from beneath the car at speed or while accelerating. Test-drivers are also advised to 'listen' for any unwelcomed noises from the front suspension.

Finally, ensure the gear selector moves freely between its positions. Charger may be affected by a fairly common problem with a part inside the selector mechanism that can prevent it from being shifted, particularly out of 'PARK'.

Engine

Charger offered up 3 engine options. The standard 2.7 litre V6 should be avoided because of reliability concerns—leaving shoppers to pick between a 3.5 litre V6 with 250 horsepower, or a 5.7 litre HEMI V8 with up to 370. Automatic transmissions were fitted to all models, and all-wheel drive was optional.

What owners like

Styling, roominess, a generous trunk, overall value and overall performance were all highly rated by Charger owners. Particularly, HEMI-powered models were loved for robust acceleration and sound effects.

What owners dislike

Some owners complain of limited outward visibility, big blind spots, poor fuel consumption with the V8, and a 'slippery' feel to driving the Charger in the rain or snow. Proper winter tires should address the latter.

Verdict

Shoppers longing for style, size and performance over fuel mileage shouldn't be disappointed by a healthy, well-maintained Charger. Shop with confidence once the model you're considering gets a thumbs-up from a mechanic.

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L.A. show proves that cars are always greener (and shinier) on the other side

AUTO PILOT
Mike Goetz
drive@metronews.ca

Do you suffer from shiny object syndrome, or SOS as it's known in the self-help industry? Are you pulled invisibly toward bright shiny objects, and then transfixed in their orbit, while you try to rationalize their purchase or theft? Then don't go, like I did last week, to the Los Angles Auto Show. It's full of things you will want to steal or buy — even the so-called green ones. The evolution of green vehicles coming in more and more attractive packages has happened over the last decade or so, after automakers realized that we consumers are drawn to green, so long as it is in a vehicle form that fits our emotional or practical needs, for whatever life stage we're in at the moment.

For example, while small and utilitarian is the ultimate way to go green, the chances are slim that you're going to buy a smart for-two electric if you go to ski country every winter weekend with four kids and a smelly dog. On the flip side, the chances are also slim you're going to shell out $100,000-plus for a cool Fisker Karma hybrid when you're a freshman at U of Jagermeister. The talking heads during the automakers' press days at the L.A. show repeatedly mentioned that there is no silver bullet to green technology, and that they'll have to make green advances on all fronts and on all types of vehicles, and that the vehicles themselves cannot "not deliver" their respective brand promises.

So, if I could, I would like to draw your attention to three L.A. debuts that illustrate this vision.

Santa Claus prepares to treat himself to an early present on hearing the news that a 2013 Jetta is now only $168 a month. ***"I'm telling everyone – but not everyone believes in me,"*** **he commented.**

Chevrolet Spark EV

Chevrolet is GM's go-to brand for targeting young hipsters and value-conscious elders. As Chevrolet's smallest car, the Spark is already a great urban mobility device, and the electrification of it makes it even more so. When it goes on sale next summer, for about $32,500 US (the U.S. federal rebate of $7,500 lowers the price to $25,000), it will be GM's first all-electric passenger vehicle since the EV1 was controversially discontinued in 2003. Unfortunately, the small number of Spark EVs coming to Canada next year is strictly for fleet accounts.

Technical highlights: Lots of components carried over from Volt; First vehicle to use new SAE Combo DC Fast Charging protocol, enables Spark EV to charge to 80 per cent in 20 minutes; Two seven-inch LCD screens to better utilize smartphone infotainment, like navigation, satellite radio and Apple's Siri voice thing. On top of that is a Lithium ion battery pack and electric motor (designed and built by GM in the U.S.) which delivers 130 hp and 400 pound-feet of torque! It should be a hoot to drive. Expect speeds of around 80 km/h.

Mercedes-Benz Ener-G-Force

The L.A. show hosted a design challenge, where automakers could envision a Highway Patrol Vehicle in 2025. Mercedes-Benz came up with the Ener-G-Force, which channels the vibe of a G Class off-roader circa 1979. There is, however, a twist. The G Force stores rainwater in the tanks on the roof, and transfers it to the "hydro-tech convertor," where it's turned into hydrogen for operating the fuel cells. "Swappable" battery packs are stored in the side skirts. There is an electric motor at each wheel to deliver four-wheel drive. A 360-degree topography scanner sends data to the suspension computer, which adjusts suspension parameters for maximum traction. It's a zero-emission vehicle with zero tolerance for citizen misbehaviour.

BMW i8 Spyder

The BMW i8 Spyder shown in L.A. is definitely a concept, but production versions of both i8 coupes and convertibles are definitely coming sometime around the 2014-15 timeframe. Expect prices of more than $100,000 and top speeds of more than 150 mph, so they'll definitely be worthy of wearing the BMW badge. The "petrol" part of the plug-in hybrid concept is a three-cylinder turbo-diesel, expected to deliver about 70 mpg (3.36 L/100 km).

2013 Jetta
LEASE FROM $168 PER MONTH FOR 36 MONTHS* 1.9% APR
$0 DOWN PAYMENT $0 FIRST MONTH'S PAYMENT**

2013 Tiguan
LEASE FROM $298 PER MONTH FOR 48 MONTHS* 1.9% APR
$0 FIRST MONTH'S PAYMENT**

Small prices. Big news.

Das Auto.

1-800 DRIVE VW vw.ca

*Limited time lease offer available through Volkswagen Finance, on approved credit, based on a new and unregistered 2013 Jetta 2.0L / 2013 Tiguan 2.0T base model with 5-speed/6-speed manual transmission. $1,395/$1,610 freight and PDI included in monthly payment. 36/48-month term. $0/$2,585 down payment, $220/$350 security deposit and amount exceeding the $400/$500 maximum amount offered for the first month's payment, if applicable, due at lease inception. Total lease obligation: $6,048/$16,889. 60,000/64,000 kilometre allowance; charge of $0.12/$0.15 per km for excess kilometres. PPSA fee, license, insurance, registration, any dealer or other charges, options, and applicable taxes are extra. **First monthly payment of $0 available on a 36/48-month lease (through Volkswagen Finance, on approved credit) of select new and unregistered 2013 Jetta / 2013 Tiguan models (TDI Clean Diesel and Jetta GLI models excluded) up to a maximum of $400/$500 (excluding taxes). 2013 Jetta Highline 2.5L as shown is $24,590. 2013 Tiguan Comfortline 2.0T with Sport Package as shown is $33,475. Models shown for illustration purposes only. Models may not be exactly as shown. Vehicles may not be exactly as shown. Some features may be optional on some models and available at additional cost. Dealer may lease for less. Dealer order/trade may be necessary. Offers end January 2, 2013 and are subject to change or cancellation without notice. Visit vw.ca or your Volkswagen dealer for details. "Volkswagen", the Volkswagen logo, "Das Auto & Design", "Jetta" and "Tiguan" are registered trademarks of Volkswagen AG. © 2012 Volkswagen Canada.

Horoscopes

Aries
March 21 - April 20
Look ahead and make plans — the bigger the better. The planets are encouraging you to try out new ways of doing things and before the current week is over, you will have had a revelation of some kind.

Taurus
April 21 - May 21
What happens over the next 24 hours will convince you there can be no more looking back. It is the future that matters and the future begins now. Change your life by changing the way you think about it.

Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Why do you believe you are surrounded by enemies? Whatever the reason, it must not be allowed to stop you from taking risks. Over the next few days, if you bet against the odds, you might just win big.

Cancer
June 22 - July 23
What is the one thing you are really good at? Everyone has a talent of some sort and if you identify yours and do something with it, you will soon enjoy amazing success. Do what comes naturally and do it brilliantly.

Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Be brave and take that big gamble you have been thinking of. There are, of course, no guarantees but life is supposed to be fun and one of the most fun things you can do is to reach beyond your usual limits.

Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
A long-term problem will work itself out to your complete satisfaction today and to say you will be surprised is a big understatement. Don't think about it too much, just make the most of it.

Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
It seems you have been working at cross purposes with a friend, but the good news is you can easily set things straight. Identify what each of you is trying to accomplish then resolve to help one another.

Scorpio
Oct. 2 04 - Nov. 22
Someone new will come into your life today and it could be the start of a great friendship. You may be as different as chalk is from cheese but for some reason you will click. It could be you are soul mates.

Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Old-fashioned ideas and habitual routines tend to bore you and that's good because success will come through trying new things. Don't just move with the times, move ahead of the times. Shake up the status quo.

Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Whatever it is you get up to next it is sure to change the way other people look at you, and maybe even the way you look at yourself. Strive to be different, not just today but every day from now on.

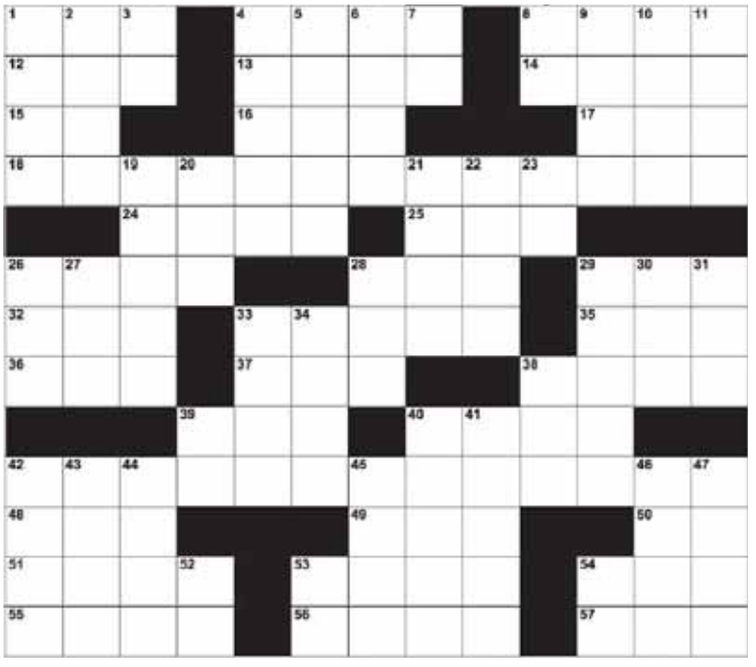
Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You will have plenty to say for yourself today but there is a danger you will say too much and turn others against you. That may not worry you much now but it will later on when you need their assistance.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Today's events will surprise you, especially if you are the kind of Pisces who thinks in terms of black and white or good and bad. Try not to be so conservative in your opinions. Strive to see the bigger picture.

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword

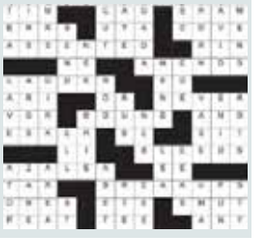
BY BETTY MARTIN



Across
1. Auger
4. Skin
8. Star —: Deep Space Nine
12. Stage of sleep (abbr.)
13. Vicinity
14. Peacekeeping grp.
15. Battery sz.
16. Common suffix
17. "Smoking or —?"
18. Problem solving technique24. Rose holder
24. Urn
25. Part of UCLA
26. Catty
28. — de Janeiro
29. Runaway singer Shannon
32. Vocalized pauses
33. Yield
35. Jay-Z's genre
36. Understand
37. Flee from the law
38. Balsam and Evergreen
39. Charlottetown province (abbr.)
40. Use the phone
42. Genuinely real
48. GPS heading (abbr.)
49. NHL legend Bobby
50. First two vowels in a sequence
51. Orange peel
53. Only one time
54. Rap sheet abbreviation
55. Director Preminger
56. Meadows
57. Berlin article

Down
1. Spirited horse
2. "What Not to —"
3. Letters between K and N
4. Growing —
5. Greeted the day
6. Monthly expense
7. Apiece (abbr.)
8. Actress who starred in Father Dowling Mysteries (init.)
9. Indian Queen
10. British prep school.
11. "King —"
19. Cease
20. Author Fleming
21. Ken or Lena
22. Tooth anchor
23. Form of address
26. "Sleepless in Seattle" actress Ryan
27. Sooner than, poetically
28. Zodiac symbol
29. Boring tool
30. Corn unit
31. CD's predecessor
33. Jane Lynch drama
34. Precipitation
38. Tampa state
39. Chemistry measure (abbr.)
40. Time frame
41. Farm units
42. Flying (prefix)
43. Condo, e.g.
44. Camping necessity
45. Pitch
46. Trout habitat
47. Part of a decade
52. "— the Right Thing"
53. Chemical suffix
54. Billboard use

Yesterday's Crossword



What's online

See today's answers metronews.ca/answers.

Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

8			3		9			
9	3						6	5
	7			2		8		
	5		6	7				1
		7				6		
6				5	4		2	
		9		8			1	
7	6						8	4
			1		3			6

Yesterday's Sudoku

6	7	9	3	4	2	8	5	1
1	4	2	8	7	5	9	3	6
3	5	8	9	6	1	4	2	7
5	3	1	2	8	4	7	6	9
8	9	7	5	1	6	2	4	3
2	6	4	7	9	3	1	8	5
7	8	6	4	5	9	3	1	2
9	2	5	1	3	8	6	7	4
4	1	3	6	2	7	5	9	8

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CITY: 7.1L/100 KM

Limited model shown

2013 ELANTRA

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SE with Tech. shown

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DELIVERY & DESTINATION INCLUDED.

2013 AJAC BEST NEW SMALL CAR
(OVER $21K)

HWY: 5.6L/100 KM
CITY: 8.7L/100 KM

Limited model shown

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GET UP TO

$3,500 IN PRICE ADJUSTMENTS‡ WITH 0%† FINANCING FOR 48 MONTHS

FRIENDS & FAMILY SELLING PRICE $22,064♦

SONATA GL AUTO.
DELIVERY & DESTINATION INCLUDED.

THE MOST FUEL-EFFICIENT FULL-SIZED CAR – NATURAL RESOURCE CANADA'S 2012 ECOENERGY VEHICLE AWARD◊

HWY: 6.7L/100 KM
CITY: 10.1L/100 KM

Limited model shown

2013 SANTA FE

GET UP TO

$1,150 IN PRICE ADJUSTMENTS‡ WITH 0%† FINANCING FOR 24 MONTHS

FRIENDS & FAMILY SELLING PRICE $27,109♦

SANTA FE 2.4L FWD AUTO.
DELIVERY & DESTINATION INCLUDED.

2013 AJAC BEST NEW SUV
(OVER $35K)

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5-year/100,000 km Emission Warranty

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North Vancouver, 604-985-0055
D#6700

OpenRoad Hyundai
13171 Smallwood Place
Richmond, 604-606-9033
D#28516

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Surrey, 604-539-8549
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D#30780

Maple Ridge Hyundai
23213 Lougheed Highway
Maple Ridge, 604-467-3401
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30250 Automall Dr.
Abbotsford, 604-857-2622
D#9390

Mertin Hyundai
45753 Yale Rd.
Chilliwack, 604-702-1000
D#30337

Destination Hyundai
445 Kingsway
Vancouver, 604-292-8188
D#31042